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PUBLICATIONS  
OF  
THE WESLEY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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NUMBER I.—

JOHN BENNET'S COPY OF THE MINUTES OF THE  
CONFERENCES OF 1744, 1745, 1747 AND 1748;  
WITH WESLEY'S COPY OF THOSE  
FOR 1746.

LONDON :

Published for the WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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## P R E F A C E.

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THERE is great propriety in selecting the Minutes of the earliest Conferences as the first publication of the Wesley Historical Society. It was in these Conferences that the foundation-stones of Methodism were laid. There the doctrinal teaching was defined, the method of procedure in the great work determined, and the disciplinary regulations fixed.

Wesley gives the following brief account of these early meetings:—"In June, 1744, I desired my brother and a few other Clergymen to meet me in London, to consider how we should proceed to save our own souls and them that heard us. After some time I invited the Lay Preachers that were in the house to meet with us. We conferred together for several days, and were much comforted and strengthened thereby. The next year I not only invited most of the Travelling Preachers, but several others to confer with me in Bristol. And from that time for some years, though I invited only a part of the Travelling Preachers, yet I permitted any that desired it to be present. This I did for many years, and all that time the term *Conference* meant, not so much the conversation we had together, as the persons that conferred; namely, those that I invited to confer with me from time to time. So that all this time it depended on me alone, not only what persons should constitute the Conference,—but whether there should be any Conference at all."\*

Then, as now, the term Conference was used to designate the persons who were present. The Minutes were always entitled during Wesley's life "Minutes of some late Conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and others," and afterwards "Minutes of several Conversations, &c." In the republication of the Minutes in 8vo., begun in the year 1812, they were called "Minutes of the Methodist Conferences." The phrase, 'The Minutes of Conference,' is now familiar to Methodists in all parts of the world.

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\* *Thoughts upon some late Occurrences*, in *Works*, xiii. pp. 215, 216.

The first *printed* Minutes appeared in the year 1749; but a record or all the proceedings of the Conferences up to that time had been made in writing, though it is not known who acted as official Secretary or Recorder of the several meetings, and it is probable that other members of the Conference wrote out copies of the Minutes for their own use.

One of the most valuable of the MS. copies of these early Minutes is preserved in the Headingley College Library. The Rev. G. S. Rowe describes it as "a small book (6 ins. by 4 ins.)"; and adds, "It is accompanied by a document, which authenticates it satisfactorily as the copy used by Wesley and carried in his pocket until he began to publish the Minutes. Its appearance agrees herewith, the paper boards in which it is bound being much worn. The contents are in four handwritings; and, here and there, are corrections in Wesley's own hand. The record begins with the Wednesday of the Conference of 1744; and as this appears on the first page, the pages being consecutively numbered, it would seem that the printed Minutes of the two preceding days were taken from another report."

The following is an exact copy of the document referred to, which is in the hand-writing of Miss Tooth, a lady well known in London Methodism in the earlier half of this century:—

The successional integrity of this little valuable book is thus ascertained and accurately traced :

- i. Mr. Wesley, who repositied it with his step son-in-law,
- ii. Mr. Smith, of Newcastle, at whose death it fell into the
- iii. hands of his daughter, Mrs. Sundins, of Stoke Newington; and from her descended to the guardian care of
- iv. Richard Smith, Esqre., of honoured memory. At his decease in 1854, it became the property of his widow and sole executrix,
- v. Mrs. Smith, whose signature attests these undoubted facts.

Deal,  
3rd Feby., 1857.

M. A. SMITH  
ELIZ. T. TOOTH.

The 'little valuable book,' with other documents and papers in the possession of Miss Tooth, was acquired by the late Mr. Morley of Leeds, and presented by his widow to Headingley College.

In the Headingley College there is also amongst the Morley papers a single 4to sheet, written on both sides, and containing a short extract "from a manuscript book written by John Johnson, 1751, and given by him to Mr. Robert Spence of York." Its contents are a summary of the preliminary discussions on June 25th, 1744, a couple of phrases from Answer 4 of the same date, and Questions 5 & 6 with Answers from the Minutes of June 27, 1744. They present no variant reading.

Recently another and in some respects more complete copy has been brought to light. It was made by John Bennet, one of the early Preachers,

who was present at the first Conference and at most of those immediately following. A large number of interesting early Methodist MSS., amongst them this copy of the Minutes in Bennet's handwriting, have been in the possession of the Bennet family for three generations. A few months ago this little volume was given to Mr. R. Thursfield Smith, J.P., of Whitchurch, Salop, who has kindly consented to allow it to be printed. This manuscript is of peculiar interest as it contains the Minutes of the year 1748, not found in Wesley's, nor, as yet, in any other copy. That of 1749, wholly in Wesley's own handwriting, is in the possession of Mr. George Stampe, of Grimsby, and has been printed in the Appendix to the first volume of the Revised Minutes, 1862, where, on p. 708, it is wrongly stated to be in the handwriting of the Rev. John Jones. The error probably arose from the facts, that the MS. was once in the possession of Mr. Jones, and in the record of later Conferences shows traces of more hands than one.

On a close comparison of Wesley's and Bennet's copies, it becomes evident that in all probability they had a common origin. There are only a few verbal differences between them, all of which are duly indicated in the following pages.

Wesley's first printed Minutes, to which reference has been made, were issued in Dublin, in 1749, in two modest duodecimo pamphlets, of 30 and 32 pages respectively. One of them contains definitions and statements of Methodist doctrine; the other, regulations affecting discipline and methods of work. Accordingly these two little pamphlets have long been distinguished as the Doctrinal and the Disciplinary Minutes.

But these pamphlets do not present a precise transcript of the proceedings and decisions of the Conferences; nor are the records which they contain given in the exact order in which the subjects were considered. Wesley, following a disposition he had already begun to show, abridged the whole, and re-arranged the details as he pleased. A desire to possess a complete and chronological record of these first Conferences has long been felt. Hitherto this desire could not be gratified. Happily it now can, as appears in the following pages.

The distinguishing features of the Minutes here reproduced are two. In the first place the proceedings of the Conferences are preserved in the order in which they were conducted from day to day; and, in the second place, the records are completer than have ever before been printed.

Of the two copies, Wesley's and Bennet's, the text of the latter is the more full, and is therefore reproduced *verbatim*. Corrections have been made in orthography where necessary; but in other respects the editors have striven to preserve the record exactly in its original form. The variant

readings in Wesley's copy are of three kinds,—the use of a different word in the original text, the erasure of a word and substitution of another in Wesley's handwriting, and the addition of a word or phrase also in Wesley's handwriting. These are all inserted in square brackets in the text, and in the second and third cases footnotes are added in which the precise character of the variation is stated. Bennet's copy does not contain any record for 1746, or Wesley's copy for 1748. In the former case Wesley's copy is printed in the text, and in the latter the square brackets necessarily cease.

Didsbury College,  
1896.

## BENNET'S MINUTES.

1744.

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MONDAY, JUNE 25TH, 1744.

The following persons being met at the Foundery, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, John Hodges, Henry Piers, Samuel Taylor, and John Meriton, after some time spent in prayer, the design of our meeting was proposed, namely, to consider :—

1. What to teach ;
2. How to teach ; &c.
3. What to do, *i.e.*, how to regulate our Doctrine, Discipline and Practice.

But first it was inquired whether any of our Lay Brethren should be present at this Conference, and it was agreed to invite from time to time such of them as we should think proper. 'T was then asked, Which of them shall we invite to-day? The answer was, Thomas Richards, Thomas Maxfield, John Bennet, and John Downes, who were accordingly brought in. Then was read as follows :—

It is desired that all things may be considered as in the immediate presence of God ; That we may meet with a single eye, and as little children who have everything to learn ; That every point may be examined from the foundation ; That every person may speak freely whatever is in his heart ; and That every question proposed may be fully debated, and bolted to the bran.

The first preliminary question was then proposed, namely, How far does each of us agree to submit to the unanimous judgement of the rest? It was answered, In speculative things each can only submit so far as his judgement shall be convinced : in every practical point so far as we can without wounding our consciences. To the second preliminary question, viz., How far should any of us mention to others what may be mentioned here? it was replied, Not one word which may be here spoken of persons should be mentioned elsewhere. Nothing at all, unless so far as we may be convinced the glory of God requires it. And from time to time we will consider on each head, Is



it for the glory of God that what we have now spoken should be mentioned again ?

About 7 o'clock we began to consider the doctrine of Justification, the questions relating to which were as follows, with the substance of the answers thereto.

Q. 1. What is it to be justified ?

A. To be pardoned and received into God's favour, and into such a state that, if we continue therein, we shall be finally saved.

Q. 2. Is faith the condition of justification ?

A. Yes : for everyone who believeth not is condemned, and everyone who believes is justified.

Q. 3. But must not repentance and works meet for repentance go before faith ?

A. Without doubt, if by repentance you mean conviction of sin, and by works meet for repentance, obeying God as far as we can, forgiving our brother, leaving off from evil, doing good and using His ordinances according to the power we have received.

Q. 4. What is faith ?

A. Faith, in general, is a divine supernatural *Elenchos* of things not seen, *i.e.*, that is of past, future, or spiritual things ; 't is a spiritual sight of God and the things of God. Therefore repentance is a low species of faith, *i.e.*, a supernatural sense of an offended God. Justifying faith is a supernatural inward sense, or sight, of God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. First, a sinner is convinced by the Holy Ghost, Christ loved me and gave Himself for me ; this is that faith by which he is justified, or pardoned, the moment he receives it. Immediately the same spirit bears witness, Thou art pardoned, thou hast redemption in His blood ; and this is saving faith, whereby the love of God is shed abroad in his heart.

Q. 5. Have all true Christians this faith ? May not a man be justified and not know it ?

A. That all true Christians have this faith, even such a faith as implies an assurance of God's love, appears from Rom. viii. 15, Eph. iv. 32, 2 Cor. xiii. 5, Heb. viii. 10, 1 John iv. 10, and last 1 John v. 19. And that no man can be justified and not know it, appears farther from the very nature of things, for faith after repentance is ease after pain, rest after toil, light after darkness ; and from the immediate as well as distant fruits.

Q. 6. But may not a man go to heaven without it ?

A. It doth not appear from Holy writ that a man who hears the Gospel can (Mark xvi. 16), whatever a heathen may do (Rom. ii. 14).

- Q. 7. What are the immediate fruits of justifying faith ?  
 A. Peace, joy, love, power over all outward sin, and power to keep down all inward sin.
- Q. 8. Does any one believe who has not the witness in himself ? or any longer than he sees, loves and obeys God ?  
 A. We apprehend not ; seeing God being the very essence of faith, love and obedience the inseparable properties of it.
- Q. 9. What sins are consistent with justifying faith ?  
 A. No wilful sin. If a believer sins, he thereby forfeits his pardon. Neither is it possible he should have justifying faith again, without previously repenting.
- Q. 10. Must every believer come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness ? Will he do so unless by ignorance or unfaithfulness ? Does God otherwise withdraw Himself ?  
 A. It is certain a believer need never again come into condemnation. It seems he need not come into a state of doubt, or fear, or darkness ; and that (ordinarily at least) he will not, unless by ignorance and unfaithfulness. Yet it is true that the first joy does seldom last long, that it is commonly followed by doubts and fears, and that God usually permits very great heaviness before any large manifestation of Himself.
- Q. 11. Are works necessary to the continuance of faith ?  
 A. Without doubt ; for a man may forfeit the gift of God either by sins of omission or commission.
- Q. 12. Can faith be lost but for want of works ?  
 A. It cannot, but through disobedience.
- Q. 13. How is faith made perfect by works ?  
 A. The more we exert our faith, the more 't is increased : to him that hath, more and more is given.
- Q. 14. St. Paul says, Abraham was not justified by works ; St. James, he was justified by works. Do not they then contradict each other ?  
 A. No. 1. Because they do not speak of the same justification. St. Paul speaks of that justification which was when Abraham was 75 years old, above 20 years before Isaac was born : St. James of that justification which was when he offered up Isaac on the altar. 2. Because they do not speak of the same works. St. Paul speaks of works that precede faith, St. James of works that spring from faith.
- Q. 15. In what sense is Adam's sin imputed to all mankind ?  
 A. In Adam all die, i.e., 1. Our bodies then became mortal. 2. Our souls died, i.e., were disunited from God. 3. And hence we are all born with a sinful, devilish nature ; by reason whereof, 4. We all are children of wrath, liable to death eternal. Rom. v. 18 ; Eph. ii. 3.

- Q. 16. In what sense is the righteousness of Christ imputed to believers, or to all mankind?
- A. We do not find it affirmed expressly in Scripture, that God imputes the righteousness of Christ to any; although we do find, that faith is imputed unto us for righteousness. That text, "As by one man's disobedience all men were made sinners, so by the obedience of one all were made righteous," we conceive means, By the merits of Christ all men are cleared from the guilt of Adam's actual sin. We conceive farther that through the obedience and death of Christ, 1. The bodies of all men become immortal after the Resurrection; 2. Their souls recover a capacity of spiritual life; 3. And an actual seed or spark thereof. 4. All believers become children of grace; 5. Are re-united to God: and 6. Made partakers of the Divine Nature.
- Q. 17. Have we not then unawares leaned too much towards Calvinism?
- A. It seems we have.
- Q. 18. Have we not also leaned towards Antinomianism?
- A. We are afraid we have.
- Q. 19. What is Antinomianism?
- A. The doctrine which makes void the law through faith.
- Q. 20. What are the main pillars thereof?
- A. 1. That Christ abolished the moral law. 2. That Christians therefore are not obliged to observe it. 3. That one branch of Christian liberty is liberty from obeying the commandments of God. 4. That it is bondage to do a thing because it is commanded, or forbear it because it is forbidden. 5. That a believer is not obliged to use the ordinances of God, or to do good works. 6. That a preacher ought not to exhort to good works; not unbelievers because it is hurtful, not believers because it is needless.
- Q. 21. What was the occasion of St. Paul writing his Epistle to the Galatians?
- A. The coming of certain men among the Christians, who taught, Except ye be circumcised, and keep the whole law of Moses, ye cannot be saved.
- Q. 22. What is his main design therein?
- A. To prove, 1, That no man can be justified or saved by the works of the law, either moral or ritual; 2. That every believer is justified by faith in Christ, without the works of the law.
- Q. 23. What does he mean by the works of the law?
- A. All works that do not spring from faith in Christ.
- Q. 24. What is meant by being under the law?
- A. Under the Mosaic dispensation.



Q. 25. What law has Christ abolished?

A. The ritual law of Moses.

Q. 26. What is meant by liberty?

A. Liberty, 1, from the law ; 2, from sin.

ON TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE THE 26TH,  
was considered the doctrine of Sanctification, with regard to which  
the questions asked and the substance of the answers given were as  
follows :—

Q. 1. What is it to be sanctified?

A. To be renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness.

Q. 2. Is faith the condition or the instrument of sanctification, or present salvation?

A. It is both the condition and the instrument of it. When we begin to believe, then salvation begins. And as faith increases, holiness increases, till we are created anew.

Q. 3. Is not every believer a new creature?

A. Not in the sense of St. Paul, 2 Cor v. 17. All old things are passed away in him who is so a new creature, and all things become new.

Q. 4. But has every believer a new heart?

A. A great change is wrought in the heart or affections of every one as soon as he believes ; yet he is still full of sin, so that he has not then a new heart in the full sense.

Q. 5. Is not every believer born of God, a temple of the Holy Ghost?

A. In a low sense he is ; but he that is, in the proper sense, born of God, cannot commit sin.

Q. 6. What is implied in being made perfect in love?

A. The loving the Lord our God with all our mind and soul and strength : Deut. vi. 5, xxx. 6, Ezek. xxxvi.

Q. 7. Does this imply, that he who is thus made perfect cannot commit sin?

A. St. John affirms it expressly ; he cannot commit sin because he is born of God, ch. iii. 10.\* And, indeed, how should he? seeing there is now none occasion of stumbling in him, ch. ii. 10.

Q. 8. Does it imply that all inward sin is taken away?

A. Without doubt. Or how should he be said to be saved from all his uncleannesses?

Q. 9. Can we know one that is thus saved? What is a reasonable

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\* The reference intended is probably 1 John iii. 9.

proof of it?

A. We cannot, without the miraculous discernment of spirits, be infallibly certain of those who are thus saved. But we apprehend these would be the best proofs which the nature of the thing admits, (unless they should be called to resist unto blood). If, 1, we had sufficient evidence of their unblamable behaviour, at least from the time of their justification. 2. If they give a distinct account of the time and manner wherein they were saved from sin, and of the circumstances thereof, with such sound speech as could not be reproved. And, 3. Upon a strict inquiry from time to time, for two or three years following, it appeared that all their tempers, words, and actions were holy and unreprouable.

Q. 10. How should we treat those who think they have attained?

A. Exhort them to forget the things that are behind, to watch and pray always that God may search the ground of their hearts.

WEDNESDAY,\* JUNE THE 27TH,

we began to consider points of discipline, with regard to which the questions asked and the substance of the answers given were as follows :—

Q. 1. What is the Church of England?

A. According to the 20th Article, The visible Church of England is the congregation of English believers in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered. But the word Church is sometimes taken in a looser sense for a congregation professing to believe. So it is taken in the 26th Article, and in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd chapters of Revelations [the Revelation].

Q. 2. What is a member of the Church of England?

A. A believer, hearing the pure word preached, and partaking of the sacraments, duly administered, in this Church.

Q. 3. What is it to be zealous for the Church?

A. To be earnestly desirous of its welfare, by the confirmation of its present members in faith, hearing, and communicating; of its increase, by the addition of new members.

Q. 4. How are we to defend the doctrine [doctrines] of the Church?

A. Both by our [omit our] preaching and living.

Q. 5. Do the 8, 13, 15, 16, 17, 21, 23, and 27 Articles agree with Scripture?

A. We will consider.

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\* The Headingley copy (Wesley's) begins here.

Q. 6. How shall we bear the most effectual testimony against that part of the clergy, who either preach or live contrary to the doctrine of the Church of England?

A. Not by preaching, for they do not hear us: but by an earnest and tender address from the press.

Q. 7. How should [shall] we behave at a false or railing sermon?

A. If it only contain personal reflections, we may quietly suffer it. If it blaspheme the work and Spirit of God, it may be better to go out of Church. In either case, if opportunity serve, it would be well to speak or write to the Minister.

Q. 8. How far is it our duty to obey the Bishops?

A. In all things indifferent. And on this ground of obeying them, we should observe the canons, so far as we can with a safe conscience.

Q. 9. Do we separate from the Church?

A. We conceive not. We hold communion therewith for conscience sake, by constant attending both the word preached, and the sacraments administered therein.

Q. 10. What then do they mean who say, You separate from the Church?

A. We cannot certainly tell. Perhaps they have no determinate meaning; unless by the Church they mean themselves, i.e., that part of the clergy who accuse us of preaching false doctrine. And it is sure we do herein separate from them, by maintaining the doctrine which they deny.

Q. 11. But do you not weaken the Church?

A. Do not they who ask this by the Church mean themselves? We do not purposely weaken any man's hands, but accidentally we may thus far,—they who come to know the truth by us, will esteem such as deny it less than they did before. But the Church, in the proper sense, the congregation of English believers, we do not weaken at all.

Q. 12. Do not you entail a schism on the Church? i.e., Is it not probable that your hearers after your death will be scattered into all sects and parties? Or that they will form themselves into a distinct sect?

A. 1. We are persuaded the body of our hearers will even after our death remain in the Church, unless they be thrust out. 2. We believe notwithstanding either that they will be thrust out, or that they will leaven the whole Church. 3. We do, and will do, all we can to prevent those consequences which are supposed likely to happen after our death. 4. But we cannot with good conscience neglect the present opportunity of saving souls while we live, for fear of consequences which may possibly or probably happen after we are dead.

THURSDAY, JUNE THE 28TH,  
were considered other points of discipline. The substance of the questions and answers was as follows :—

Q. 1. How are the people divided who desire to be under your care?  
A. Into the United Societies, the Bands, the Select Societies, and the Penitents.

Q. 2. How do these differ from each other?

A. The United Societies (which are the largest of all) consist of awakened persons. Part of these, who are supposed to have remission of sins, are more closely united in the Bands. Those in the Bands, who seem to walk in the light of God, compose the Select Societies. Those of them who have made shipwreck of the faith, meet apart as penitents.

Q. 3. What are the Rules of the United Societies?

A. Those that follow. (Then they were read.)

Q. 4. What are the Rules of the Bands?

A. They are these, (which were read and considered).

Q. 5. What are the Rules of the Select Societies?

A. The same : and these three, 1. Let nothing spoken in this Society be spoken again ; no, not even to the members of it. 2. Every member agrees absolutely to submit to his Minister in all indifferent things. 3. Every member, till we can have all things common, will bring once a week, *bonâ fide*, all he can spare towards a common stock.

Q. 6. Are there any particular [peculiar] Rules for the Penitents ?

A. Not yet.

Q. 7. What officers belong to these Societies ?

A. The Ministers, Assistants, Stewards, Leaders of Bands, Leaders of Classes, Visitors of the Sick, Schoolmasters, House-keepers.

Q. 8. What is the office of a Minister ?

A. To watch over the souls whom God commits to his charge, as he that must give an account.

Q. 9. What is it to be moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon yourself this office ?

A. It can mean no less than to be immediately convinced by the Spirit of God that it is His will.

Q. 10. Is field-preaching unlawful ?

A. We do not conceive that it is contrary to any law, either of God or man. Yet (to avoid giving any needless offence) we never preach without doors, when we can with any conveniency preach within.

Q. 11. Where should we endeavour to preach most ?

A. 1. Where we can preach in the Church. 2. Where there is an open door, quiet and willing hearers. 3. Where there is the



greatest increase of souls.

Q. 12. What is the best way of spreading the Gospel?

A. To go a little and a little farther from London, Bristol, St. Ives, Newcastle, or any other Society. So a little leaven would spread with more effect and less noise, and help would always be at hand.

Q. 13. What is the best general method in preaching?

A. 1. To invite. 2. To convince. 3. Offer Christ. And lastly to build up. And to do this (in some measure) in every sermon.

#### FRIDAY, JUNE THE 29TH,

we considered,

Q. 1. Are Lay Assistants allowable?

A. Only in cases of necessity.

Q. 2. What is the office of our Assistants?

A. In the absence of the Minister to feed and guide, to teach and govern the flock. 1. To expound every morning and evening. 2. To meet the United Societies, the Bands, the Select Societies, and the Penitents every week. 3. To visit the classes (London [and Bristol]\* excepted) once a month. 4. To hear and decide all differences. 5. To put the disorderly back on trial, and to receive on trial for the Bands or Society. 6. To see that the Stewards and the Leaders, Schoolmasters and Housekeepers faithfully discharge their several offices. 7. To meet the Stewards, the Leaders of the Bands and Classes weekly, and overlook their accounts.

Q. 3. What are the Rules of an Assistant?

A. 1. Be diligent, never be unemployed a moment, never be triflingly employed, [never while away time,] spend no more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

2. Be serious. Let your motto be, Holiness unto the Lord. Avoid all lightness as you would avoid hell-fire, and laughing as you would cursing and swearing.

3. Touch no woman; be as loving as you will, but hold your hands off 'em. Custom is nothing to us.

4. Believe evil of no one. If you see it done, well; else take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on every thing. You know the judge is always allowed [supposed]† to be on the prisoner's side.

5. Speak evil of no one; else your word especially would eat as

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\* This addition is made in Wesley's handwriting.

† Corrected in Wesley's writing.

doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your [own] breast, till you come to the person concerned.

6. Tell everyone what you think wrong in him, and that plainly, and as soon as may be, else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste, therefore, to cast the fire out of your bosom.
  7. Do nothing as a gentleman : you have no more to do with this character than with that of a dancing-master. You are the servant of all, therefore
  8. Be ashamed of nothing but sin : not of fetching wood, or drawing water, if time permit ; not of cleaning your own shoes or your neighbour's.
  9. Take no money of any one. If they give you food when you are hungry, or clothes when you need them, it is good. But not silver or gold. Let there be no pretence to say, we grow rich by the Gospel.
  10. Contract no debt without my knowledge.
  11. Be punctual : do everything exactly at the time ; and in general do not mend our rules, but keep them, not for wrath but for conscience sake.
  12. Act in all things not according to your own will, but as a son in the Gospel. As such, it is your part to employ your time in the manner which we direct : partly in visiting the flock from house to house (the sick in particular) ; partly, in such a course of Reading, Meditation and Prayer, as we advise from time to time. Above all, if you labour with us in our Lord's vineyard, it is needful you should do that part of the work [which] we prescribe [direct]\* at those times and places which we judge most for His glory.
- Q. 4. Should all our Assistants keep journals ?
- A. By all means, as well for our satisfaction as for the profit of their own souls.
- Q. 5. Shall we now fix where each labourer shall be (if God permits) till we meet again ?
- A. Yes : (which was accordingly done).
- Q. 6. What is the office of a Steward ?
- A. 1. To manage the temporal things of the Society. 2. To receive the weekly contributions of the Leaders of the classes. 3. To expend what is needful from time to time. 4. To send relief to the poor. 5. To see that the public buildings be kept clean and in good repair. 6. To keep an exact account of Receipts and Expenses. 7. To inform the Helpers, if the rules of the house, of the school [schools], of the Bands, or

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\* Corrected in Wesley's writing.

of the Society, be not punctually observed : and 8. If need be, to inform the Minister hereof. 9. To tell the Helpers in love, if they think anything amiss in their doctrine or life. 10. If it be not removed, to send timely notice to<sup>d</sup> the Minister. 11. To meet his fellow Steward weekly, in order to consult together on the preceding heads.

Q. 7. What are the Rules of a Steward ?

A. 1. Be frugal, save everything that can be saved honestly. 2. Spend no more than you receive. Contract no debt. 3. Do nothing rashly : let every design be thoroughly weighed, before you begin to execute it. 4. Have no long accounts : pay everything within the week. 5. Give none that ask relief an ill word or ill look. Do not hurt them, if you cannot help them. 6. Expect no thanks from man. 7. Remember you are a servant of the Helper, not his master : therefore speak to him always as such.

Q. 8. What is the business of a Leader of a Band ?

A. It is set down in the Rules of the Bands ; as the business of a Class-leader, in the Rules of the Society.

Q. 9. What is the business of a Visitor of the sick ?

A. 1. To see every person within his district thrice a week. 2. To inquire into the state of their souls, and advise them, as occasion may require. 3. To inquire into their disorder, and procure advice for them. 4. To inquire if they are in want, and relieve them [if it may be, in kind]. 5. To do anything for them which he can. 6. To bring his account weekly to the Stewards.

Q. 10. What are the Rules of a Visitor ?

A. 1. Be plain and open with [in] dealing with souls. 2. Be mild, patient, tender. 3. Be clean [cleanly] in all you do for them. 4. Be not nice.

Q. 11. Can we have a Seminary for labourers ?

A. If God spare us until another Conference.

Q. 12. With whom should we correspond ? When ?

A. Once a month, with each Assistant, and with some other person (at least) in each Society.

Q. 13. How shall we fix the Watch-Nights, Letter-Days, and Love-feasts, till we meet again ?

A. At London, Bristol, and Newcastle thus :—

| Watch-Nights. | Letter-Days.  | Lovefeasts.   |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| July 13.      | July 23.      | July 29.      |
| August 10.    | August 20.    | August 26.    |
| September 7.  | September 17. | September 23. |
| October 12.   | October 22.   | October 28.   |

Q. 14. What books may an Assistant read ?

- A. Sallust, Caesar, Tully, Erasmus, Castello, Terence, Virgil, Horace, Vida, Buchanan, G. Test, Epictetus, Plato, Ignatius, Ephrem Syrus, Homer, Greek Epigrams, Duport, Bp. Usher's Sermons, Arndt, Boehm, Nalson, Pascal, Frank, R. Gell, *our Tracts*.
- Q. 15. How shall we exclude formality from prayer and conversation ?
- A. 1. By preaching frequently on the heads. 2. By watching always, that we may speak only what we feel.
- Q. 16. What shall I write next ? What abridge ?
- A. Write a farther Appeal, Sermons : abridge and print 16 Sermons, Dr. Knight's Manual, 2 Discourses, Great Audit, The whole Duty of Man, Edwards.
- Q. 17. Is it lawful to bear arms ?
- A. We incline to think it is : 1. Because there is no command against it in the New Testament ; 2. Because Cornelius, a soldier, is commended there, and not mentioned to have laid them down.
- Q. 18. Is it lawful to use the law ?
- A. As defendant doubtless. And perhaps as plaintiff in some cases, seeing magistrates are an ordinance of God.

ON SATURDAY, JUNE THE 30TH,

we considered :—

- Q. 1. Can we unite any farther with the Moravians.
- A. It seems not, were it only for this reason, they will not unite with us.
- Q. 2. Can we unite any farther with Mr. Whitefield ?
- A. If he make any overtures towards it.
- Q. 3. Shall we propose a conference with either ?
- A. With Mr. Whitefield, if he returns to London. The Moravians absolutely decline it.
- Q. 4. Shall we send them the most material of the preceding questions, and desire their answers ?
- A. This can do no hurt, and may do good.
- Q. 5. Can we mend our economy in temporal things ?
- A. We will consider this with the Stewards.
- Q. 6. Have we changed in anything for the worse, since we began our Society ?
- A. It does not appear to us that we have.
- Q. 7. Is there anything amongst us that stops the work of God ?
- A. Perhaps sins of omission, neglect of self-denial and taking up our cross.
- Q. 8. When and where shall those of us who can meet again ?
- A. If God permits, Nov. 1st at Newcastle, Feb. 1st at Bristol, May 1st London,



BRISTOL, THURSDAY, AUGUST 1st, 1745.

The following persons being met together at the New Room, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, John Hodges, Thomas Richards, Samuel Larwood, Thomas Meyrick, James Wheatley, Richard Moss, John Slocombe, Herbert Jenkins, Marmaduke Gwyne [Gwynne], it was inquired :—

Q. 1. Should we still consider ourselves as little children, who have everything to learn?

A. Yes, so far as to have our minds always open to any farther light which God may give us.

Q. 2. What general method may we observe in our following Conferences?

A. 1. To read and weigh at every Conference each article of those preceding. 2. To speak freely and hear calmly touching each, that we may either retract, amend, or enlarge it.

Q. 3. Should not the time of this Conference be a time of particular watching and self-denial?

A. It should.

Q. 4. Should we not desire all who can of the Society to join with us to-morrow in fasting and prayer?

A. We will desire them so to do.

Q. 5. Ought not every question which shall be proposed to be examined from the foundation?

A. Without question it ought. If there was any defect herein at the last Conference, let us amend it now.

Q. 6. How can we effectually provide that everyone may speak freely whatever is in his heart?

A. By taking care to check no one, either by word or look, even though he should say what was quite wrong.

Q. 7. How shall we provide that every point may be fully and thoroughly settled?

A. Let us beware of making haste or showing any impatience, whether of delay or of contradiction.

About seven, it was proposed to review the Minutes of the last Conference with regard to justification.

Q. 1. How comes what is written on this subject to be so intricate and obscure? Is this obscurity from the nature of the thing itself? or from the fault or weakness of those who have generally treated of it?

A. We apprehend this obscurity does not arise from the nature of the subject: but perhaps partly from hence, that the devil peculiarly labours to perplex a subject of the greatest importance, and partly from the extreme warmth of most writers who have treated of it.

- Q. 2. We affirm faith is the sole condition of justification. But does not repentance go before that faith? Yea, and (supposing there be an opportunity for them) fruits or works meet for repentance?
- A. Without doubt they do.
- Q. 3. How then can we deny them to be conditions of justification? Is not this a mere strife of words? But is it worth while to continue a dispute on the term 'condition'?
- A. It seems not, though it has been generally abused. But so the abuse cease, let the use remain.
- Q. 4. Shall we read over together Mr. Baxter's Aphorisms concerning justification?
- A. By all means : which were accordingly read. And it was desired that each person present would in the afternoon consult the Scriptures cited therein, and bring what objections might occur the next morning.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 2ND,

the question was proposed,

- Q. 1. Is an assurance of God's love absolutely necessary to our being in His favour? Or may there possibly be some exempt cases?
- A. We dare not positively say, there are not.
- Q. 2. Is such an assurance absolutely necessary to inward and outward holiness?
- A. To inward, we apprehend it is : to outward holiness, we incline to think it is not.
- Q. 3. Is it indispensably necessary to final salvation? Suppose in a Papist, or a Quaker ; or, in general, among those who never heard it preached?
- A. Love hopeth all things. We know not how far any of those may fall under the case of invincible ignorance.
- Q. 4. But what can we say of one of our own Society who dies without it, as John Warr at London?
- A. It may possibly be an exempt case (if the fact was really so) : but we determine nothing. We leave his soul in the hands of Him that made it.
- Q. 5. How [Wesley omits How] does a man believe any longer than he sees God?
- A. We conceive not. But we allow there may be infinite degrees in seeing God ; even as many as there are between him who sees the sun when it shines on his eyelids closed, and him who stands with his eyes wide open in the full blaze of his beams.
- Q. 6. Does a man believe any longer than he loves God?
- A. In no wise : for neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails,

without faith working by love.

Q. 7. Have we duly considered the case of Cornelius? Was not he in the favour of God, when his prayers and his alms came up for a memorial before God? i.e., before he believed in Him?

A. It does seem that he was. But we speak not of those who have not heard the Gospel.

Q. 8. But were those works of his splendid sins?

A. No: nor were they done without the grace of Christ.

Q. 9. How then can we maintain, that all works done before we have a sense of the pardoning love of God are sin? And, as such, an abomination to him?

A. The works of him who has heard the Gospel and does not believe are not done as God hath willed, and commanded them to be done. Therefore they are sinful. And yet we know not how to say, that they are abomination to the Lord in him who feareth God, and from that principle does the best he can.

Q. 10. Seeing there is so much difficulty in this subject, can we deal too tenderly with them that oppose us?

A. We cannot, unless we give up any part of the truth of God.

Q. 11. Is a believer constrained to obey God?

A. At first he is. The love of Christ constraineth him. After this he may obey, or he may not; no necessity being laid upon him.

Q. 12. Can faith be lost, but through disobedience?

A. It cannot. A believer first inwardly disobeys, inclines to sin with his heart. Then his intercourse with God is lost, i.e., his faith is lost, and after this he may fall into outward sin, being now weak and like unto another man.

Q. 13. How can such a man recover faith?

A. By repenting and doing the first works, Rev. ii. 5.

Q. 14. Whence is it that the majority of those that believe fall more or less into doubt or fear?

A. Chiefly from their own ignorance or unfaithfulness: often from their not watching unto prayer: perhaps sometimes from some defect or want of the power of God in the preaching they hear.

Q. 15. Is there not a defect in us? Do we preach as we did at the first? Have we not changed our doctrines?

A. 1. At first we preached almost wholly to unbelievers. To these, therefore, we spake almost continually of remission of sins through the death of Christ, and the nature of faith in His blood. And so we do still, among those who need to be taught the first elements of the Gospel of Christ. 2. But those in whom the foundation is already laid, we exhort to go

on to perfection : which we did not see so clearly at first, although we occasionally spake of it from the beginning. 3. Yet we now preach, and that continually, faith in Christ as the Prophet, Priest, and King, at least as clearly, as strongly, and as fully as we did six years ago.

Q. 16. Do we not discourage visions and dreams too much? As if we condemned them *toto genere*?

A. We do not intend to do this : [we neither discourage nor encourage them]. We learn from Acts ii. 19, &c., to expect something of this kind in the last days. And we cannot deny that saving faith is often given in dreams or visions in the night; which faith we account neither better nor worse than if it come by any other means.

Q. 17. Do not our Assistants preach too much of the wrath and too little of the love of God?

A. We fear they have leaned to that extreme ; and hence some may have lost the joy of faith.

Q. 18. Need we ever preach the terror of the Lord to those who know they are accepted of Him?

A. No. It is folly so to do. For love is to them the strongest of all motives.

Q. 19. Do we ordinarily represent a justified state so great and happy as it is?

A. Perhaps not. A believer walking in the light is inexpressibly great and happy.

Q. 20. Should we not have a care of depreciating justification, in order to exalt the state of full sanctification?

A. Undoubtedly, we should beware of this, or [for] one may insensibly slide into it.

Q. 21. How shall we effectually avoid it?

A. When we are going to speak of entire sanctification, let us first describe the blessings of a justified state as strongly as possible.

Q. 22. Does not the truth of the Gospel lie very near both to Calvinism and Antinomianism?

A. Indeed it does : as it were, within a hair's breadth. So that 'tis altogether foolish and sinful, because we do not quite agree either with one or the other, to run from them as far as ever we can.

Q. 23. Wherein may we come to the very edge of Calvinism?

A. 1. In ascribing all good to the free grace of God. 2. In denying all natural free-will, and all power antecedent to grace : and 3. In excluding all merit from man, even for what he has or does by the grace of God.

Q. 24. Wherein may we come to the very edge of Antinomianism?



A. 1. In exalting the merits and love of Christ : 2. In rejoicing evermore.

Q. 25. What can we do to stop the progress of Antinomianism ?

A. 1. Pray without ceasing that God would speak for Himself. 2. Write one or two more dialogues.

Q. 26. Doth faith supersede (set aside the necessity of) holiness or good works ?

A. In no wise : so far from it, that it implies both, as a cause does its effects.

About 10, we began to speak of Sanctification, with regard to which it was enquired :—

Q. 1. When does inward sanctification begin ?

A. In the moment we are justified, the seed of every virtue is then instantaneously sown in the soul. From that time the believer gradually dies to sin, and grows in grace. Yet sin remains in him, yea the seed of all sin, till he is sanctified throughout in spirit, soul, and body.

Q. 2. What will become of a Heathen, a Papist, or a Church-of-England man, if he dies without being thus sanctified ?

A. He cannot see the Lord. But none who seeks it sincerely shall or can die without it ; though possibly he may not attain it till the very article of death.

Q. 3. Is it ordinarily given till a little before death ?

A. It is not, to those who expect it no sooner nor probably ask for it.

Q. 4. But ought we to expect it sooner ?

A. Why not ? Although we grant, 1. That the generality of believers [whom we have hitherto known]\* are not so sanctified till near death. 2. That few of those to whom St. Paul wrote his Epistles were so at that time he wrote. 3. Nor he himself at the time of writing his former Epistles ; yet this does not prove that we may not to-day.

Q. 5. But would not one who was thus sanctified be incapable of worldly business ?

A. He would be far more capable of it than ever, as going through all without distraction.

Q. 6. Would he be capable of marriage ?

A. [M<sup>e</sup> is H in all.†] We cannot well judge. But supposing he were not, the number of those in that state is so small it would produce no inconvenience.

\* Added in Wesley's handwriting.

† In Wesley's own handwriting. Cf. Heb. xiii. 4.

- Q. 7. Does the Scripture mention any living men who were wholly sanctified?
- A. Yes : St. John, and all those then with the apostle in whose name he speaks those words (1 John iv. 17), "Herein (or through Him) is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as He is so are we in this world."
- Q. 8. Can a justified person judge of a sanctified?
- A. Not without a peculiar gift of God. For the spiritual man is judged of no man.
- Q. 9. Should we not then beware of bearing hard on those who think they have attained?
- A. We should. And the rather, because if they are faithful to the grace they have received, they are in no danger of perishing at last. No : not even if they remain in luminous faith for many months or years, perhaps till within a little of their spirits returning to God.
- Q. 10. In what manner should we preach entire sanctification?
- A. Scarce at all to those who are not pressing forward : to those who are, always by way of promise, always drawing rather than driving.
- Q. 11. How should we wait for the fulfilling of this promise?
- A. In universal obedience ; in keeping all the commandments ; in denying ourselves and taking up our cross daily. These are the general means which God hath ordained for our receiving His sanctifying grace. The particular are prayer, searching the Scripture, communicating, and fasting.

ON SATURDAY, AUG. 3RD,  
were considered points of discipline :—

- Q. 1. Can he be a spiritual governor of the church, who is not a believer, not a member of it?
- A. It seems not : though he may be a governor in outward things, by a power derived from the king.
- Q. 2. What are properly the laws of the Church of England?
- A. The Rubrics : and to those we submit, as the ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake.
- Q. 3. But is not the will of our governors a law?
- A. No. Not of any governor, temporal or spiritual. Therefore if any Bishop wills that I should not preach the Gospel, his will is no law to me.
- Q. 4. But what if he produce a law against your preaching?
- A. I am to obey God rather than man.
- Q. 5. Is Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Independent church-government

most agreeable to reason?

- A. The plain origin of church-government seems to be this. Christ sends forth a preacher of the gospel. Some who hear him repent and believe the gospel. They then desire him to watch over them, to build them up in the faith, and to guide their souls in the paths of righteousness. Here then is an independent congregation, subject to no pastor but their own, neither liable to be controlled in things spiritual by any other man or body of men whatsoever.

But soon after some from other parts, who are occasionally present while he speaks in the name of Him that sent him, beseech him to come over and help them also. Knowing it to be the will of God he consents [complies], yet not till he has conferred with the wisest and holiest of his congregation, and with their advice appointed one who has gifts and grace to watch over the flock till his return.

If it please God to raise another flock in the new place, before he leaves them he does the same thing, appointing one whom God has fitted for the work to watch over these souls also. In like manner, in every place where it pleases God to gather a little flock by his word, he appoints one in his absence to take the oversight of the rest, and to assist them of the ability which God giveth. These are Deacons, or servants of the church, and look on their first pastor as their common father. And all these congregations regard him in the same light, and esteem him still as the shepherd of their souls.

These congregations are not strictly independent. They depend on one pastor, though not on each other.

As these congregations increase, and as the Deacons grow in years and grace, they need other subordinate Deacons or helpers; in respect of whom they may be called Presbyters, or Elders, as their father in the Lord may be called the Bishop or Overseer of them all.

- Q. 6. Is mutual consent absolutely necessary between the pastor and his flock?
- A. No question: I cannot guide any soul, unless he consents to be guided by me. Neither can any soul force me to guide him, if I consent not.
- Q. 7. Does the ceasing of this consent on either side dissolve the relation?
- A. It must in the nature of things. If a man no longer consent to be guided by me, I am no longer his guide, I am free. If one will not guide me any longer, I am free to seek one who will.
- Q. 8. But is the shepherd free to leave his sheep? Or the sheep to

leave their shepherd ?

- A. Yes ; if one or the others are convinced it is for the glory of God and the superior good of their souls.
- Q. 9. How shall we treat those who leave us ?
- A. Beware of all sharpness, or bitterness, or resentment. 2. Talk with them once or twice at least. 3. If they persist in their design, consider them as dead, and name them not unless in prayer.
- Q. 10. Can I attend any more Societies than I do ? Seeing this would imply the spending less time with the rest.
- A. It seems not : at least till the Societies already formed are more established in grace.
- Q. 11. May we not make a trial, especially in Wales and Cornwall, of preaching without forming any Societies ?
- A. It might be well ; and by this means we may preach in every large town where a door is open.
- Q. 12. Should we permit any serious persons to be present when our Society meets ?
- A. At some time he may if he particularly desire it, but not always, nor the same person frequently.
- Q. 13. Have we borne a sufficient witness to the truth ? Particularly when attacked by the Clergy ?
- A. Perhaps not : we have generally been content with standing on the defensive.
- Q. 14. May not this cowardice have hindered the work of God, and have caused us to feel less of His power ?
- A. Very probably it may.
- Q. 15. How shall we act in such cases for the time to come ?
- A. Not only refute, but retort the charge. Their mouths must be stopped (only in meekness and love), and the eyes of others opened.
- Q. 16. Is it expedient for us to converse more with the Clergy ?
- A. Yes ; wherever they are willing we should.
- Q. 17. With our chief opposers or persecutors ?
- A. It might do good : 1. When they make any overtures toward it ; 2. When we can take them unawares, and converse with them alone.
- Q. 18. National sins call aloud for national judgments : what shall we do to prevent them ?
- A. The first Friday in every month, at least, speak expressly on this head, and insist on the necessity of general repentance to prevent a general scourge.
- Q. 19. Should we talk of persecution before it comes ?
- A. To talk or think before of any particular persecution only weakens our hands. And how long the general persecution may be



deferred, God only knows.

It was next inquired with regard to our Assistants,

Q. 1. Should any other rule be added to the twelve?

A. Only this:—You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always, not only to those who want you, but to those who want you most.

Q. 2. Who are our present Assistants?

A. Jonathan Reeves, James Wheatley, Jno. Nelson, Jno. Bennet, Jno. Trimbath [Trembath], Francis Walker, Thos. Maxfield, Thos. Richards, Jno. Downes, Thos. Westal [Westell], James Jones, Samuel Larwood, Hen. Millard, [Thomas Maxfield], Thos. Meyrick.

Q. 3. What general method of spending their time may our Assistants have?

A. They may spend the mornings (from 6 to 12) in reading, writing, and prayer; from 12 to 5, visit the sick and well; and from 5 to 6, use private prayer.

Q. 4. Can I travel less in order to write more?

A. As yet it does not seem advisable.

Q. 5. Should not my brother follow me step by step, and Mr. Merriton him?

A. As far as is possible.

Q. 6. Can we have a Seminary for labourers [yet]?

A. Not till God gives us a proper tutor.

Q. 7. How shall we order our correspondence at home and abroad?

A. 1. Fix whom to correspond with monthly in every place. 2. Divide them between my brother and me. 3. Send them notice in every place.

Q. 8. Shall we keep a little stock of medicines at London, Bristol, and Newcastle, according to the Collection of Receipts?

A. It would be well so to do.

Q. 9. Which are the Watch-Nights, Intercession-Days, and Love-Feasts till January?

| A. Watch-Nights. | Inter.-Days. | Love-Feasts. | Letter-Days. |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Aug. 2           | Sept. 6      | Aug. 18      | Aug. 13      |
| „ 28             | Oct. 3       | Sept. 15     | Sept. 10     |
| Sept. 27         | Nov. 8       | Oct. 13      | Oct. 8       |
| Nov. 1           | Dec. 6       | Nov. 17      | Nov. 12      |
| „ 30             |              | Dec. 15      | Dec. 10      |
| Dec. 27          |              |              |              |

Q. 10. What should I write next?

A. 1. Advice to the Methodists. 2. Dialogues. 3. Appeal to all. 4. Finish the Farther Appeal. 5. Sermons.

Q. 11. Is it lawful to bear arms?

A. We cannot tell. We will endeavour to hear Mr. E. and K. together.

Q. 12. Can we unite any farther with those of the Tabernacle?

A. We are ready to receive any that come, if they walk as becometh the Gospel.

Q. 13. What books should we keep for our own use at London, Bristol and Newcastle?

A. Those that follow :—

i. Divinity, Practical.

1. The Bible.
2. Our Tracts.
3. Ab. Usher's
4. Boehm's
5. Nalson's
6. Frank's [Franck's] Works.
7. Pascal's Thoughts.
8. Beveridge's Thoughts.

} Sermons.

„ Doctrinal.

1. Pearson on the Creed.
2. Fell on the Epistles.

ii. Physick.

1. Drake's Anatomy.
2. Quincy's Dispensatory.
3. Allen's Synopsis.
4. Dr. Cheyne's [Cheyney's] Works.

iii. Natural Philosophy.

1. Nature Delineated. Millar's Gardener's Dictionary Abridged.

iv. Astronomy.

1. Whiston's Astronom. Principles.
- 2.
- 3.

v. History.

1. Universal History.

vi. Poetry.

1. Spencer.
2. Sir Jno. Davis.
3. Milton.
4. Our hymns and poems.

vii. Latin Prose.

1. Sallust.
2. Cornelius Nepos.
3. Tully [Tullij] Philosophica, and De Officiis.
4. Cypriana [Cypriani] Opera.
5. Castellio's Dialogues.
6. Erasmi Selecta.
7. Austin's Confessions.
- 8.

## Latin Verse.

1. Terence.
2. Virgil.
- 3.
4. Selecta Horatij, [Mart.] Juv. Pers. &c.
5. Vida.
6. Casimir.
7. Buchanan.
- 8.

## viii. Greek Verse.\*

- 9.
1. Greek Test., Hederici Lexicon.
2. Plato's Select Dialogues.
3. Xenophon's Cyropædia.
4. Epictetus.
5. Antoninus de se ipso.
6. Ignatius, &c.
7. Ephraim Syrus.
8. Macarius, Chrysost. de Sacerd.

## ,, Verse.

1. Homer's Iliad.
2. Epigrammatum Delectus.
3. Duport's Job, &c.

## ix. Hebrew.

- 4.
1. The Bible. Buxtorf.

Q. 14. When shall we meet here again?

A. In January next, if God permit.

## 1746.

(The Minutes for this year are found only in the Headingley copy.)

MONDAY, MAY 12TH, 1746.

The following persons being met at the New Room in Bristol,—  
John Wesley, Charles Wesley, John Hodges, Jonathan Reeves, Thos.  
Maxfield, Thos. Westell, and Thos. Willis, it was enquired:—

Q. 1. Who are the properest persons to be present at any Conference  
of this nature?

A. 1. As many of the Preachers as conveniently can. 2. The most  
earnest and most sensible of the Band Leaders, where the  
Conference is; and 3. Any pious and judicious stranger, who  
may be occasionally in the place.

\* An evident error for Prose.

- Q. 2. Might it not be useful to read over one or more of our Tracts at each Conference?
- A. Doubtless it might; were it only to correct what is amiss, and explain what is obscure in each.
- Q. 3. Which shall we read now?
- A. The "New England Narrative," and the "Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God," (which were read).
- Q. 4. Would it not be proper to send these to each of the Bishops?
- A. Let them be sent as soon as possible.

TUESDAY, MAY 13TH,

The same persons being present, it was inquired:—

- Q. 1. Can any unbeliever (whatever he be in other respects) challenge anything of God's Justice?
- A. Absolutely nothing but Hell: and this is a point which we cannot too much insist on.
- Q. 2. Do we empty men of their own righteousness, as we did at first? Do we sufficiently labour, when they begin to be convinced of sin, to take away all they lean upon? Should we not then endeavour with all our might to overturn their false foundations?
- A. This was at first one of our principal points, and it ought to be so still, for till all other foundations are overturned, they cannot build upon Christ.
- Q. 3. Did we not then purposely throw them into convictions? Into strong sorrow and fear? Nay, did we not strive to make them inconsolable? Refusing to be comforted?
- A. We did, and so we should do still. For the stronger the conviction, the speedier is the deliverance; and none so soon receives the peace of God as those who steadily refuse all other comfort.
- Q. 4. Let us consider a particular case. Was you, Jonathan Reeves, before you received the peace of God, convinced that, notwithstanding all you did or could do, you was in a state of damnation?
- A. J. R. I was convinced of it, as fully as that I am now alive.
- Q. 5. Are you sure that conviction was from God?
- A. J. R. I can have no doubt but it was.
- Q. 6. What do you mean by a state of damnation?
- A. J. R. A state wherein if a man dies he perishes for ever.
- Q. 7. How did that conviction end?
- A. J. R. I had first a strong hope that God would deliver me, and this brought a degree of peace. But I had not that solid peace of God till Christ was revealed in me.

- Q. 8. But is not such a trust in the love of God, though it be as yet without a distinct sight of God reconciled through Christ Jesus, a low degree of justifying faith?
- A. Perhaps it is. But this abides for a short time only ; nor is this the proper Christian faith.
- Q. 9. By what faith were the Apostles clean before Christ died ?
- A. By such a faith as this ; by a Jewish faith ; for the Holy Ghost was not then given.
- Q. 10. Of whom then do you understand those words (Isa. l. 10), *Who is there among you that feareth the Lord ? that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light ?*
- A. Of a believer under the Jewish Dispensation, one in whose heart God hath not yet shined to give him the light of the glorious love of God in the face of Jesus Christ.
- Q. 11. Who is a Jew (inwardly) ?
- A. A servant of God : one who sincerely obeys him out of fear. Whereas a Christian (inwardly) is a child of God, one who sincerely obeys him out of love.
- Q. 12. But was you not sincere before Christ was revealed in you ?
- A. J. R. It seemed to me that I was in some measure.
- Q. 13. What is sincerity ?
- A. Willingness to know and do the will of God. The lowest species thereof seems to be faithfulness in that which is little.
- Q. 14. Has God any regard to man's sincerity ?
- A. So far that no man in any state can possibly be accepted without it, neither indeed in any moment wherein he is not sincere.
- Q. 15. But can it be received that God has any regard to the sincerity of an unbeliever ?
- A. Yes ; so much that if he persevere therein, God will infallibly give him faith.
- Q. 16. What regard may we conceive Him to have to the sincerity of a believer ?
- A. So much that in every sincere believer He fulfils all the great and precious promises.
- Q. 17. Whom do you term a sincere believer ?
- A. One that walks in the light as God is in the light.
- Q. 19.\* Is sincerity the same with a *Single Eye* ?
- A. Not altogether. The latter refers to our intention, the former to our will or desires.
- Q. 19. Is it not all in all ?
- A. All will follow persevering sincerity. God gives everything with it, nothing without it.

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\* This mistake in enumeration occurs in the original.



Q. 20. Are not then sincerity and faith equivalent terms ?

A. By no means. It is at least as nearly related to works as it is to faith. For example, Who is sincere before he believes ? He that then does all he can : he that according to the power he has received brings forth *works meet for repentance*. Who is sincere after he believes ? He that, from a sense of God's love, is zealous of all good works.

Q. 21. Is not sincerity what St. Paul terms a willing mind ? *Prothumia*, 2 Cor. viii. 12.

A. Yes, if that word be taken in a general sense, for it is a constant disposition to use all the grace given.

Q. 22. But do we not then set sincerity on a level with faith ?

A. No ; for we allow a man may be sincere and not be accepted, as he may be penitent and not be accepted (not as yet), but cannot have faith and not be accepted. The very moment he believes, he is justified.

Q. 23. But do we not give up faith, and put sincerity in its place, as the condition of our acceptance with God ?

A. We believe it is one condition of our acceptance, as repentance likewise is. And we believe it a condition of our continuing in a state of acceptance. Yet we do not put it in the place of faith. It is by faith the merits of Christ are applied to my soul ; but if I am not sincere, they are not applied.

Q. 24. Is not this that *going about to establish your own righteousness* whereof St. Paul speaks, Rom. x. 4\* ?

A. St. Paul there manifestly speaks of unbelievers who sought to be accepted for the sake of their own righteousness. We do not seek to be accepted for the sake of our sincerity, but through the merits of Christ alone. Indeed as long as any man believes, he cannot go about (in St. Paul's sense) to *establish his own righteousness*.

Q. 25. But do you consider that we are under the covenant of grace ? and that the covenant of works is now abolished ?

A. All mankind were under the covenant of grace, from the very hour that the original promise was made. If by the covenant of works you mean that of unsinning obedience made with Adam before the fall, no man but Adam was ever under that covenant : for it was abolished before Cain was born. Yet it is not so abolished, but that it will stand in a measure even to the end of the world, i.e., if *we do this*, we shall live ; if not, we shall die eternally. If we do well, we shall live with God in glory ; if evil, we shall die the second death : for

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\* The reference intended is probably Rom. x. 3.

every man shall be judged in that day, and rewarded according to his works.

Q. 26. What means then, *To him that believeth his faith is counted for righteousness*?

A. That God forgives him that is unrighteous as soon as he believes, accepting his faith instead of perfect righteousness. But then observe universal righteousness follows, though it did not precede, faith.

Q. 27. But is faith thus *counted to us for righteousness* at whatsoever time we believe?

A. Yes; in whatsoever moment we believe, all our past sins vanish away. They are as though they had never been, and we stand clear in the sight of God.

#### TUESDAY, 10 O'CLOCK.

Mr. Taylor, of Quinton, being added, it was inquired:—

Q. 1. Are not the assurance of faith, the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and revelation of Christ in us, terms nearly of the same import?

A. He that denies one of them must deny all; they are so closely connected together.

Q. 2. Are they ordinarily, where the pure Gospel is preached, essential to our acceptance?

A. Undoubtedly they are, and as such to be insisted on in the strongest terms.

Q. 3. Is not the whole dispute of salvation by faith or by works, a mere *strife of words*?

A. In asserting salvation by faith we mean this; 1. That pardon (salvation begun) is received by faith producing works: 2. That holiness (salvation continued) is faith working by love: 3. That heaven (salvation finished) is the reward of this faith. If you, who assert salvation by works, or by faith and works, mean the same thing (understanding by faith the revelation of Christ in us; by salvation, pardon, holiness, glory), we will not strive with you at all. If you do not, this is not a *strife of words*; but the very vitals, the essence of Christianity is the thing in question.

Q. 4. Wherein does our doctrine now differ from that we preached when at Oxford?

A. Chiefly in these two points: 1. We then knew nothing of the righteousness of faith in justification; nor 2. Of the nature of faith itself as implying consciousness of pardon.

Q. 5. May not some degree of love of God go before a distinct sense of justification?

A. We believe it may.

Q. 6. Can any degree of sanctification or holiness?

A. Many degrees of outward holiness may; yea, and some of meekness, and several other tempers which would be branches of Christian holiness, but that they do not spring from Christian principles; for the abiding love of God cannot spring but from faith in a pardoning God, and no true Christian holiness can exist without that love of God for its foundation.

Q. 7. Is every man as soon as he believes a new creature, sanctified, born again, pure in heart? Has he then a new heart? Does Christ dwell therein? And is he a temple of the Holy Ghost?

A. All those things may be affirmed of every believer, in a low sense. Let us not therefore contradict those who maintain it. Why should we contend about words?

#### ON WEDNESDAY, 14TH,

were considered points relating to Discipline.

Q. 1. When the pastor of a congregation dies, who has the right of choosing another?

A. Without all doubt, the congregation itself, whom no man can feed or guide without their consent.

Q. 2. What is the scriptural notion of an Apostle?

A. One who is sent of God to convert heathens.

Q. 3. How many Apostles were there in the first church?

A. A great number beside those Twelve who were eminently so called. Thus St. Paul, speaking of our Lord after His resurrection, saith, He was seen of Cephas, then of the Twelve, after that of above 500 brethren at once, then of all the apostles (1 Cor. xv).

Q. 4. What is the New Testament notion of a Prophet?

A. A builder up of the faithful.

Q. 5. In what view are we and our helpers to be considered?

A. Perhaps as extraordinary messengers, designed of God to provoke the others to jealousy.

Q. 6. Do you not slide insensibly into taking state upon yourselves? or lording it over God's heritage?

A. 1. We are not conscious to ourselves that we do. 2. But there is a continual danger. Therefore 3. We cannot be too jealous lest we should: and 4. We will thank any who warn us against it.

Q. 7. How shall we be more easy of access?

A. Let any speak to us after preaching, morning or evening.



Q. 8. How shall we try those who believe they are moved by the Holy Ghost and called of God to preach?

A. Enquire 1. Do they know in whom they have believed? Have they the love of God in their hearts? Do they desire and seek nothing but God? And are they holy in all manner of conversation? 2. Have they *Gifts* (as well as *Grace*) for the work? Have they (in some tolerable degree) a clear sound understanding? Have they a right judgment in the things of God? Have they a just conception of the *salvation by faith*? And has God given them any degree of utterance? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly? 3. Have they success? Do they not only so speak as generally either to convince or affect the hearts? But have any received remission of sins by their preaching? a clear and lasting sense of the love of God? As long as these three marks undeniably concur in any, we allow him to be called of God to preach. These we receive as sufficient reasonable evidence that he is moved thereto by the Holy Ghost.

Q. 9. But how shall we know, in the case of a particular person, whether there is this evidence or no?

A. 1. We will send one of our Helpers to hear him preach, and to talk with him on the preceding heads. 2. We will hear him preach, and talk with him ourselves. 3. We will examine thoroughly those who think they have received remission of sins by his preaching. 4. We will desire him to relate or to write down the reason why he believes he is called of God to preach. 5. We will desire the congregation to join with us in fasting and prayer, that we may judge and act according to the will of God.

Q. 10. Should we not use the same method of fasting and prayer on other occasions also?

A. Without doubt we should use it; 1. At the receiving any fellow-labourer in our Lord's vineyard; 2. At going ourselves, or sending any, to a new place; 3. Before publishing any book.

Q. 11. Why do we not use more form and solemnity in receiving a new labourer?

A. We purposely decline it: 1. Because there is something of stateliness in it, whereas we would be little and inconsiderable; 2. Because we would not make haste. We desire barely to follow Providence, as it gradually opens.

Q. 12. Are there any of our Assistants whom we might employ more than the rest? In what instances?

A. There are. We might employ Jonathan Reeves, John Bennet, and John Haughton. 1. In visiting the Classes in each place. 2. In writing lists of the Societies and Bands there. 3. In

delivering new tickets where we cannot do it ourselves.

- Q. 13. Is there any prudential help for greater watchfulness and recollection, which our Assistants might use?
- A. We believe it would be an inconceivable help if they kept a journal of every hour. The manner of doing it they may learn in a few minutes by looking at one of the journals we kept at *Oxford*.
- Q. 14. In what light should your Assistants consider themselves?
- A. As learners rather than teachers: as young students at the University, for whom therefore a method of study is expedient in the highest degree.
- Q. 15. What method would you advise them to?
- A. We would advise them, 1. Always to rise at 4. 2. From 4 to 5 in the morning, and from 5 to 6 in the evening, partly to use meditation and private prayer, partly to read the Scripture (2 or 3 verses, or 1 or 2 chapters), partly some close practical book of divinity, in particular *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, *Kempis*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Mr. Law's Tracts*, *Beveridge's Private Thoughts*, *Heylin's Devotional Tracts*, *The Life of Mr. Halyburton*, and *Monsieur De Renty*. 3. From 6 in the morning (allowing one hour for breakfast) to 12, to read in order slowly, and with much prayer, *Bp. Pearson on the Creed*, *Bp. Fell on the Epistles*, *Mr. Boehm's* and *Mr. Nelson's Sermons*, *Mr. Pascal's Thoughts*, our other Tracts and Poems, *Milton's Paradise Lost*, *Cane* and *Fleury's Primitive Christianity*, and *Mr. Echard's Ecclesiastical History*.
- Q. 16. Have we in anything altered our manner of preaching for the worse since we set out?
- A. Perhaps we do not preach so much concerning the Blood of Atonement as we did at first.
- Q. 17. What inconvenience is there in speaking much of the wrath and little of the love of God?
- A. It generally hardens them that believe not, and discourages them that do.
- Q. 18. What sermons do we find by experience to be attended with the greatest blessing?
- A. 1. Such as are most close, convincing and practical. 2. Such as have most of Christ the Priest, the Atonement. 3. Such as urge the heinousness of men living in contempt or ignorance of Him.
- Q. 19. Should we preach in Moorfields?
- A. It is not clear to us that we should, as we have a more convenient place which contains as many as can hear.

## THURSDAY, MAY 15TH.

Q. 1. What is a sufficient call of Providence to a new place, suppose Edinburgh or Dublin ?

A. An invitation from some one that is worthy, from a serious man, fearing God, who has a house to receive us. 2. A probability of doing more good by going thither than by staying longer where we are.

Q. 2. Ought we not diligently to observe in what places God is pleased to pour out His spirit more abundantly ?

A. We ought, and at that time to send more labourers than usual into that part of the harvest, as at this time into Yorkshire and the country round about Coleford.

Q. 3. How can we add a proper solemnity to the admission of new members into the Bands, or the united Society ?

A. 1. Admit new members into the Bands at London, Bristol, and Newcastle, only once a quarter at the general Lovefeast. 2. Read the names of the men to be admitted on the Wednesday, of the women on the Sunday, before. 3. Admit into the Society only on the Sunday or Thursday following the Quarterly Visitation of the Classes. 4. Read the names of those to be admitted on the Tuesday, or Thursday or Sunday evening before. 5. The first time that anyone (on trial) meets a class, let the Rules of the Society be given him. 6. And let them be publicly read on the Thursday or Sunday after every admission of new members. 7. Then also let the names of those be read who are excluded from the Society.

Q. 4. How shall we guard more effectually against formality in public singing ?

A. 1. By the careful choice of hymns proper for the congregation. 2. In general try choosing hymns of praise or prayer, rather than descriptive of particular states. 3. By not singing too much, seldom a whole hymn at once, seldom more than 5 or 6 verses at a time. 4. By suiting the tune to the hymns; by often stopping short and asking the people, "Now do you know what you said last? Did it suit your case? Did you sing it as to God with the spirit and with the understanding also?"

Q. 5. Should we insist more on people's going to Church? Shall we set them the example at Bristol?

A. We will make a trial of the effect of it, by going to St. James' every Wednesday and Friday.

Q. 6. How shall we be more recollected and more useful in conversation?

A. 1. Plan every conversation before you begin. 2. Watch and pray during the time, that your mind be not dissipated. 3. Spend 2 or 3 minutes every hour in solemn prayer. 4. Strictly

observe the morning and evening hour of retirement.

Q. 7. How are your Circuits now divided?

A. Into seven. 1. LONDON (which includes Surrey, Kent, Essex, Brentford, Egham, Windsor, Wycombe). 2. BRISTOL (which includes Somersetshire, Portland, Wilts, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire). 3. CORNWALL. 4. EVESHAM (which includes Shrewsbury, Leominster, Hereford, and from Stroud to Wednesbury). 5. YORKSHIRE (which includes Cheshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutlandshire, Lincolnshire). 6. NEWCASTLE. 7. WALES.

Q. 8. Who are our present Assistants?

A. Jonathan Reeves, John Bennet, John Haughton, John Nelson, James Wheatley, John Trembath, Thomas Westell, Thomas Richards, John Downs, Thos. Meyrick, Thos. Maxfield, Francis Walker; perhaps Thos. Hardwick, James Jones, Samuel Larwood, Wm. Heard, Wm. Walker, Jos. Cownley.

Q. 9. How are these places to be supplied for this Quarter?

A. As far as we can yet see, thus:—

|              | June.            | July.           | August.          |
|--------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. London    | J.W. J.R. T.R.   | J.W. To.M. J.R. | C.W. Jo.B. Jo.D. |
| 2. Bristol   | J.M. T.Md. J.W.  | C.W. T.R. T.H.  | T.R. T.J.        |
| 3. Cornwall  | C.W. T.Mk. J.Tr. | Jo.Tr.          | T.R. F.W.        |
| 4. Evesham   | J.W. Ja.Jo.      | Ja.J. T. Jo.Co. | Jas.Co.          |
| 5. Yorkshire | To.Ha. To.W.     | J.H. J.B. Ja.W. | J.T. Jo.N. Ja.W. |
| 6. Newcastle | Ja.W. Jo.R.      | J.N. T.We. S.L. | S.L. T.W. Jo.W.  |
| 7. Wales     | Mr.M.            | T.R.            | J.W.             |

Q. 10. Which are the Intercession Days, &c., next ensuing?

A. Friday, Intercession; Friday, Watchnight; Sunday, Lovefeast; Tuesday, Letter Day.

| Fri.    | Fri.      | Sun.       | Tues.       |
|---------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Inter.  | W.-Night. | Lovefeast. | Letter-Day. |
|         | May 23    | June 1     | June 10     |
| June 6  | June 20   | June 29    | July 8      |
| July 4  | July 18   | July 27    | Aug. 5      |
| Aug. 1  | Aug. 22   | Aug. 31    | Sept. 9     |
| Sept. 5 | Sept. 19  | Sept. 28   | Oct. 7      |
| Oct. 3  | Oct. 17   | Oct. 26    | Nov. 3      |
| Nov. 7  | Nov. 14   | Nov. 23    | Dec. 2      |
| Dec. 5  | Dec. 19   | Dec. 28    | Jan. 6      |

Q. 11. Can we be of any further use to the Moravians?

A. Perhaps by writing to the Count.

Q. 12. To whom should we give copies of our Conferences?

A. Only to those who were or might have been present.

Q. 13. To whom should we read them?

A. To the Stewards and Leaders of Bands.



- Q. 14. When and where shall we meet again ?  
 A. At London, next summer, if God permit.
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## 1747.

MONDAY, JUNE 15TH, 1747.

The following persons being met at the Foundery, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Wesley [Westley] Hall, and Charles Manning, it was enquired :—

- Q. 1. Which of our brethren shall we invite to be present at this Conference ?  
 A. John Jones, Thomas Maxfield, Jonathan Reeves, John Nelson, John Bennet, John Downes, Thomas Crouch, Robert Swindels, and John Maddern : who were accordingly brought in.
- Q. 2. How may the time of this Conference be made more eminently a time of prayer, watching, and self-denial ?  
 A. 1. While we are in Conference, let us have an especial care to set God always before us. 2. In the intermediate hours, let us visit none but the sick, and spend all our time that remains in retirement. 3. Let us then give ourselves unto prayer for one another, and for the blessing of God on this our labour.
- Q. 3. Should we at every Conference read over all the Conferences we have had from the beginning ?  
 A. That immediately preceding ; and so much of the rest as we may find needful from time to time.
- Q. 4. In our first Conference it was agreed to examine every point from the foundation. Have we not been someway fearful of doing this ? What were we afraid of ? Of overturning our first principles ?  
 A. Whoever was afraid of this, it was a vain fear. For if they are true, they will bear the strictest examination. If they are false, the sooner they are overturned the better. Let us all pray for a willingness to receive light ; an invariable desire to know of every doctrine whether it be of God.
- Q. 5. It was then enquired, How far does each of us agree to submit to the unanimous judgment of the rest ?

And it was answered, In speculative things each can only submit as far as his judgment shall be convinced : in every practical point, as far as we can without wounding our several consciences.

Can a Christian submit any farther than this to any man, or number of men, upon earth ?



It is undeniably plain he cannot: either to Pope, Council, Bishop, or Convocation. And this is that grand principle of every man's right to private judgment, in opposition to implicit faith in man, on which Calvin, Luther, Melancthon, and all the ancient Reformers, both at home and abroad, proceeded, "Every man must think for himself, since every man must give an account for himself to God."

Q. 6. Shall each of us read over all the tracts which have been published before our next Conference? And write down every passage we do not approve, or do not fully understand?

A. Every one answered in (order)\* "I will endeavour so to do."

#### TUESDAY, 16TH.

Mr. Bateman of St. Bartholomew's, Mr. Piers, Howell Harris, and Thomas Hardwick being added, it was enquired:—

Q. 1. Is justifying faith a divine assurance that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me?

A. We believe it is.

Q. 2. What is the judgment of most of the serious Dissenters concerning this?

A. They generally allow, that many believers have such an assurance, and that it is to be desired and prayed for by all: but then they affirm, that this is the highest species or degree of faith, that it is not the common privilege of believers. Consequently they deny that this is justifying faith, or necessarily implied therein.

Q. 3. And are there not strong reasons for this opinion? For instance, If the true believers of old had not this assurance, then it is not necessarily implied in justifying faith; but the true believers of old had [not] this assurance.

A. David and many more of the believers of old had undeniably this assurance. But even if the Jews had it not, it would not follow that this is not implied in Christian faith.

Q. 4. But do you not know that the Apostles themselves had it not till the day of Pentecost?

A. The Apostles themselves had not the proper Christian faith till after the day of Pentecost.

Q. 5. But were not those Christian believers in the proper sense, to whom St. John wrote his first Epistle? Yet to these he says (v. 13), "*These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that ye may have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*"

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\* This word is omitted in both Bennet's and Wesley's copies.

- A. This does not prove that they did not know they had eternal life, any more than that they did not believe. His plain meaning is, "I have written unto you, that you may be the more established in the faith." Therefore it does not follow from hence, that they had not this assurance, but only that there are degrees therein.
- Q. 6. But were not the Thessalonians true believers? Yet they had not this assurance; they had only a good hope (2 Thess. ii. 16).
- A. The text you refer to runs thus, "*Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.*" This good hope does not exclude, but necessarily implies, a strong assurance of the love of God.
- Q. 7. But does not St. Paul say of himself (1 Cor. iv. 4), "*I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified*"?
- A. He does not say of himself here, that he was not justified, or that he did not know it; but only that, though he had a conscience void of offence, yet this did not justify him before God. And must not every believer say the same? This therefore is wide of the point.
- Q. 8. But does he not disclaim any such assurance in those words (1 Cor. i. 3\*), "*I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling*"?
- A. By no means. For these words do not imply any fear either of death or hell; they express only a deep sense of his utter insufficiency for the great work wherein he was engaged.
- Q. 9. However, does he not exclude Christians in general from such an assurance, when he bids them work out their salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. ii. 12)?
- A. No more than from love, which is always joined with filial fear and reverential trembling. And the same answer is applicable to all those texts which exhort a believer to fear.
- Q. 10. But does not matter of fact prove, that justifying faith does not necessarily imply assurance? For can you believe that such a person as J. A. or E. U. [V.], who have so much integrity, zeal, and fear of God, and walk so unblamably in all things, is void of justifying faith? Can you suppose such as these to be under the wrath and under the curse of God? Especially if you add to this, that they are continually longing, striving, praying for the assurance which they have not?
- A. This contains the very strength of the cause, and sometimes

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\* 1 Cor. ii. 3 is evidently the passage intended.

inclines us to think that some of these may be exempt cases. But however that be, we answer—1. It is dangerous to ground a general doctrine on a few particular experiments. 2. Men may have many good tempers, and a blameless life (speaking in a loose sense), by nature and habit, with preventing grace; and yet be utterly void of faith and the love of God. 3. 'Tis scarce possible for us to know all the circumstances relating to such persons, so as to judge certainly concerning them. 4. But this we know that Christ is not revealed in them, they are not yet Christian believers.

Q. 11. But what becomes of them then, suppose they die in this state?

A. That is a supposition not to be made. They cannot die in this state. They must go backward or forward. If they continue to seek, they will surely find righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. We are confirmed in this belief by the many instances we have seen of such as these finding peace at the last hour. And it is not impossible but others may then be made partakers of like precious faith, and yet go hence without giving any outward proof of the change which God hath wrought.

#### WEDNESDAY, 17TH.

Q. 1. How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us, with regard to entire sanctification?

A. They grant, 1. That every one must be entirely sanctified in the article of death: 2. That till then a believer daily grows in grace, and comes nearer and nearer to perfection: 3. That we ought to be continually pressing after this, and to exhort all others so to do.

Q. 2. But what do we allow them?

A. We grant, 1. That many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of them we have known, were not sanctified throughout, not made perfect in love, till a little before death. 2. That the term "sanctified" is continually applied by St. Paul to all that were justified, were true believers. 3. That by this term alone he rarely (if ever) means saved from all sin. 4. That consequently it is not proper to use it in this sense, without adding the word wholly, entirely, or the like. 5. That the inspired writers almost continually spoke of or to those who are justified, but very rarely either of or to those who were wholly sanctified. 6. That consequently it behoves us to speak almost continually of the state of justification, but rarely, at least in full and explicit terms, concerning entire sanctification.

Q. 3. What then is the point wherein we divide?

A. It is this—whether we should expect to be saved from all sin before the article of death?

Q. 4. Is there any clear Scripture promise of this—that God will save us from all sin?

A. There is—Ps. cxxx. 8 : *He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.*

This is more largely expressed in the prophecy of Ezek., *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean ; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you . . I will also save you from all your uncleannesses* (xxxvi. 25, 29).

No promise can be more full and clear. And to this the Apostle plainly refers in that exhortation, *Having these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God* (2 Cor. vii. 1). Equally clear and express is that ancient promise, *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul* (Deut. xxx. 6).

Q. 5. But does any assertion answerable to this occur in the New Testament?

A. There does, and that laid down in the plainest terms. So 1 John, iii. 8 : *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil*—the works of the devil, without any limitation or restriction : but all sin is the work of the devil. Parallel to which is that assertion of St. Paul, Eph. v. 25, 27 : *Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.* And to the same effect is his assertion in the 8th of the Romans (vv. 3, 4), *God sent his Son that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us ; walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit.*

Q. 6. Does the New Testament afford any further ground for expecting to be saved from all sin?

A. Undoubtedly it does, both in those prayers and commands which are equivalent to the strongest assertions.

Q. 7. What prayers do you mean?

A. Prayers for entire sanctification ; which, were there no such thing, would be mere mockery of God. Such in particular are, *Deliver us from evil, or rather, from the evil one.* Now when this is done, when we are delivered from all evil, there can be no sin remaining. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word ; that they all may be one ; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. . . . I in them, and thou in me, that they*



may be made perfect in one (John xvii. 20, &c.). I bow my knees unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . that he would grant you . . . that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God (Eph. iii. 14, 16, 19). The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole body, spirit, soul, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. v. 23).

Q. 8. What command is there to the same effect?

A. *Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect* (Matt vi. last).<sup>\*</sup> *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind* (Matt. xxii. 37). But if the love of God fill all the heart, there can be no sin there.

Q. 9. But how does it appear that this is to be done before the article of death?

A. First: from the very nature of a command, which is not given to the dead but unto the living. Therefore "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart" cannot mean, Thou shalt do this when thou diest, but while thou livest.†

Secondly: from express texts of Scripture. *The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, having renounced (apeipamenai ‡) ungodliness and worldly trusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works* (Titus ii. 11-14). *He hath raised up an horn of salvation for us . . . to perform the mercy promised to our fathers . . . the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, that he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies should serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life* (Luke i. 69 &c.).

Q. 10. Is there any example in Scripture of persons who had attained this?

A. Yes: St. John, and all those of whom he says in his first Epistle (iv. 17), *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we in this world.*

<sup>\*</sup> Should be Matt. v. 48.

† This entire sentence is omitted in Wesley's copy.

‡ In the Headingley copy this space is left blank.



Q. 11. But why are there not more examples of this kind recorded in the New Testament?

A. It does not become us to be peremptory in this matter. One reason might possibly be, because the Apostle\* wrote to the Church while it was in a state of infancy. Therefore they might mention such persons the more sparingly, lest they should give strong meat to babes.

Q. 12. Can you show one such example now? Where is he that is thus perfect?

A. To some that make this inquiry one might answer, If I knew one here, I would not tell you. You are like Herod, you only seek the young child to destroy it. But to the serious we answer, There are numberless reasons why there should be few, if any, indisputable examples. What inconveniences would this bring on the person himself, set as a mark for all to shoot at! What a temptation would it be to others, not only to men who knew not God, but to believers themselves! How hardly would they refrain from idolizing such a person! And yet how unprofitable to gainsayers! For if they hear not Moses and the prophets, Christ and His Apostles, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Q. 13. Suppose one had attained to this, would you advise him to speak of it?

A. Not to them who know not God: it would only provoke them to contradict and blaspheme. Nor to any without some particular reason, without some particular good in view; and then they should have an especial care to avoid all appearance of boasting, and to speak more loudly and convincingly by their lives than they can do by their tongues.

Q. 14. Is it a sin not to believe those who say they have attained?

A. By no means; even though they said true, we ought not hastily to believe, but to suspend our judgment till we have farther and stronger proof.

Q. 15. But are we not apt to have a secret distaste to any who say they are saved from all sin?

A. 'Tis very possible we may, and that on several grounds,—partly from a concern for the honour of God, and the good of souls who may be hurt, yea, or turned out of the way, if these are not what they profess; partly from a kind of implicit envy at those who speak of higher attainments than our own; and partly from our slowness and unreadiness of heart to believe the works of God.

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\* So in both copies, though the context requires the plural.

Q. 16. Does not the harshly preaching perfection tend to bring believers into a kind of bondage or slavish fear?

A. It does. Therefore we should always place it in the most amiable light, so that it may excite only hope, joy, and desire.

Q. 17. Why may we not continue in the joy of faith even till we are made perfect?

A. Why indeed? Since holy grief does not quench this joy; since even while we are under the cross, while we deeply partake of the sufferings of Christ, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable.

Q. 18. Do we not discourage believers from rejoicing evermore?

A. We ought not so to do. Let them all their life long rejoice unto God, so it be with reverence. And even if lightness or pride should mix with their joy, let us not strike at the joy itself (this is the gift of God), but at the lightness or pride, that the evil may cease and the good remain.

Q. 19. Ought we to be anxiously careful about perfection, lest we should die before we have attained it?

A. In no wise. We ought to be thus careful for nothing, neither spiritual nor temporal.

Q. 20. But ought we not to be troubled on account of the sinful nature which still remains in us?

A. It is good for us to have a deep sense of this, and to be much ashamed before the Lord. But this should only incite us the more earnestly to turn unto Christ every moment, and to draw light and life and strength from Him, that we may go on, conquering and to conquer. And therefore, when a sense of our sins most abounds, the sense of His love should much more abound.

Q. 21. Will our joy or trouble increase as we grow in grace?

A. Perhaps both. But without doubt our joy in the Lord will increase as our love increases.

Q. 22. Is not the teaching believers to be continually poring upon their inbred sin the ready way to make them forget that they are purged from their former sins?

A. We find by experience that it is; or to make them undervalue and account it a little thing: whereas indeed (though there are still greater gifts behind) this is inexpressibly great and glorious.

About 10 (Mr. Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham, being added), we began to consider points of discipline.

Q. 1. What is schism in the Scripture sense of the word?

A. The word only occurs twice in the New Testament: 1 Cor. i. 10, where St. Paul exhorts them, that there may be no schisms among them (*schismata* is the word which we render divisions);

and xii. 25, "God hath mingled the body together, having given the more abundant honour to that part which lacked, that there may be no schism in the body," i.e., in the Church, the body of Christ. In both these places the word undeniably means (which consequently is the true spiritual notion of *schism*) a causeless breach, rupture, or division, made amongst the members of Christ, among those who are the living body of Christ, and members in particular.

Q. 2. Are not the Methodists guilty of making such a schism?

A. No more than rebellion or murder. They do not divide themselves at all from the living body of Christ. Let any prove it, if they can.

Q. 3. But do not they divide themselves from the Church of England?

A. No: they hold communion therewith now in the same manner as they did 20 years ago, and hope to do so until their lives' end.

Q. 4. You profess to obey both the governors and rules of the Church, yet in many instances you do not obey them: how is this consistent? Upon what principles do you act, while you sometimes obey and sometimes not?

A. It is entirely consistent. We act at all times on one plain, uniform principle,—“We will obey the rules and governors of the Church, whenever we can consistently with our duty to God: whenever we cannot, we will quietly obey God rather than men.”

Q. 5. But why do you say you are thrust out of the Church? Has not every minister a right to dispose of his own church?

A. He ought to have, but in fact he has not. A minister desires I should preach in his church, but the Bishop forbids him. That Bishop then injures him, and thrusts me out of that church.

Q. 6. Does a church in the New Testament always mean “a single congregation?”

A. We believe it does. We do not recollect any instance to the contrary.

Q. 7. What instance or ground is there in the New Testament for a national church?

A. We know none at all. We apprehend it to be a mere political institution.

Q. 8. Are the three orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons plainly described in the New Testament?

A. We think they are, and believe they generally obtained in the churches of the Apostolic age.

Q. 9. But are you assured, God designed the same plan should obtain in all churches throughout all ages?

A. We are not assured of this, because we do not know that it is

asserted in Holy Writ.

Q. 10. If this plan were essential to a Christian church what must become of all the foreign Reformed Churches?

A. It would follow, they are no parts of the Church of Christ,—a consequence full of shocking absurdity.

Q. 11. In what age was the divine right of episcopacy first asserted in England?

A. About the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Till then all the Bishops and Clergy in England continually allowed and joined in the ministrations of those who were not episcopally ordained.

Q. 12. Must there not be numberless accidental varieties [variations] in the government of various churches?

A. There must in the nature of things. As God variously dispenses His gifts of nature, providence, and grace, both the offices themselves and the officers in each ought to be varied from time to time.

Q. 13. Why is it that there is no determinate plan of church-government appointed in Scripture?

A. Without doubt, because the wisdom of God had a regard to this necessary variety.

Q. 14. Was there any thought of uniformity in the government of all churches until the time of Constantine?

A. It is certain there was not; and would not have been then, had men consulted the word of God only.

#### THURSDAY, THE 18TH.

Q. 1. Have we not limited field-preaching too much?

A. It seems we have. 1. Because our calling is to save that which is lost. Now we cannot expect the wanderers from God to seek us: it is our part to go and seek them. 2. Because we are more peculiarly called, by going out into the highways and hedges (which none will do if we do not) to compel them to come in. 3. Because that reason against it is not good, 'The house will hold all that come.' The house may hold all that will come to the house [houses], but not all that will come into the field. 4. Because we have always found a greater blessing in field-preaching than in any other preaching whatever.

Q. 2. What is respect of persons, Jas. ii. 1?

A. The regarding one person more than another, on account of some outward circumstances, particularly riches.

Q. 3. Have we not fallen into this by allowing more of our time to the rich than to the poor, by not speaking so plain and home



to them, and by admitting them into the Bands or Society, though they had never received remission of sins, or had met in Band at all?

A. These are instances of such a respect of persons as we will endeavour to avoid for the time to come.

Q. 4. Would it not be well for the minister to visit the sick on Monday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday?

A. It seems no time could be more profitably employed, either for them or us.

Q. 5. How shall we keep off unwary [unworthy] communicants?

A. By being exactly careful whom we admit into the Society; and 2. By giving notes to none but those who come to us on the days appointed in each quarter.

Q. 6. How shall we thoroughly purge the Bands?

A. In visiting the classes meet those who are in the Bands every morning before the rest, and examine them as strictly as you can both as to their heart and life. 2. Meet the married men and married women apart, the first Wednesday and Sunday after each visitation: the single men and single women apart on the second Wednesday and Sunday.

Q. 7. Who are our present Assistants?

A. John Jones, Jonathan Reeves, John Haughton, James Wheatley, John Nelson, John Trimbath, Joseph Cownley, Robert Swindels, Thomas Richards, Samuel Larwood, Thomas Westal, Francis Walker, John Bennet, Thomas Maxfield, John Downes, Richard Moss, Edward Dunstone, Thomas Meyrick, Richard Williamson, John Maddern, Eliezer Webster,—perhaps Thomas Hardwick and James Jones.

Q. 8. Who are those that assist us only in one place?

A. Thomas Rawlins, J. Hathway, Samuel Rogers, John Slocumb, Corn. Bastable, John Jane, John Whitford, David Trathen, John Jenkins, John Spargo, Anth. Liddicot, Stephen Nichols, John Wheeler, John Osborn, Edward May, John Bennet, William Fenwick, Robert Blow, John Skelton, Robert Taylor, John Brown, Christopher Hopper, Archibald Patten, William Holmes, William Shent, Matthew Watson, Samuel Appleyard, William Darney, Francis Scot, Joseph Lee, John Eaton, John Appleton, John Griffiths, Richard Watts, William Walker, John Gill, Thomas Crouch, Henry Lloyd.

Q. 9. Should we admit Edward and Charles Perrionet [Parronet] into the number of our ordinary Assistants?

A. By all means. God has given them in some measure [low degree] both grace and gifts and fruits.

Q. 10. Are our Assistants exemplary in their lives? Do we enquire enough into this?



A. Perhaps not. We should consider each of them who is with us as a pupil at the University, into whose behaviour and studies we should therefore make a particular inquiry every day. Might we not particularly inquire,—Do you rise at 4? Do you study in the method laid down at the last Conference? Do you read the books we advise and no other? Do you see the necessity of regularity in study? What are the chief temptations to irregularity? Do you punctually observe the evening hour of retirement? Are you exact in writing your journal? Do you fast on Friday? Do you converse seriously, usefully, and closely? Do you pray before, and have you a determinate end in, every conversation?

Q. 11. How often should our Assistants preach?

A. Never more than twice a day, unless on a Sunday or an extraordinary occasion, of which themselves are to be the judges.

Q. 12. Are there any smaller advices concerning preaching, which it may be useful for them to observe?

A. Perhaps these that follow. 1. Be sure to begin and end precisely at the time appointed. 2. Sing no hymns of your own composing. 3. Endeavour to be serious, weighty, and solemn in your whole deportment before the congregation. 4. Choose the plainest text you can. 5. Take care not to ramble from your text, but keep close to it, and make out what you undertake. 6. Always suit the subject to the audience. 7. Beware of allegorizing or spiritualizing too much. 8. Take care of anything awkward or affected, either in your gesture or pronunciation. 9. Tell each other if you observe anything of this kind.

Q. 13. Is there any part of the work of an Assistant wherein only some of our Assistants need be employed?

A. There is. Let those and those only to whom we shall write from time to time, 1. Visit the classes in each place, and write new lists of all the members. 2. Regulate the Bands. 3. Deliver new tickets. 4. Keep watch-nights and lovefeasts. 5. Take and send us up an exact account of the behaviour of the Stewards, Housekeepers, Schoolmasters and Leaders.

Q. 14. How may the journeys of our Assistants be fixed for the ensuing six months?

A. So far as we can yet perceive, thus—

|          | July                            | Aug. | Sept.                                       | Oct. | Nov.                                    | Dec. |
|----------|---------------------------------|------|---|------|---|------|
| Cornwall | { John Haughton<br>Rt. Swindels |      | Thos. Westal<br>Jno. Trimboth<br>[Tremboth] |      | John Jones<br>John Maddrin<br>[Maddern] |      |
| Plymouth | Jos. Cownley                    |      | Rt. Swindels                                |      | Jno. Trimboth                           |      |

|              |   |  |  |
|--------------|---|--|--|
| Bristol      | { Jas. Wheatley<br>Rd. Williams<br>Jno. Nelson                              | Jos. Cownley<br>Jno. Jones<br>Eleaz. Webster                           | Rt. Swindels<br>Jonth. Reeves<br>Thos. Westal  |
| Wales        | { Thos. Richards<br>Jno. Jones  | Jno. Haughton<br>.....   | Jon. Reeves<br>.....                           |
| London       | { Charles Wesley<br>John Jones<br>Thos. Maxfield<br>J. Maddrin<br>[Maddern] | John Wesley<br>Thos Richards<br>John Downes<br>J. Maddrin<br>[Maddern] | John Wesley<br>Jno. Haughton<br>Eleaz. Webster |
| Wednesbury   | { James Jones<br>James Wheatley   | John Bennet<br>.....<br>[John Nelson]                                  | John Nelson<br>.....<br>[F. Walker]            |
| Yorkshire    | { Thos. Westal<br>[Westell]<br>Jno. Bennet<br>.....                         | John Nelson<br>[T. Meyrick]<br>Jas. Jones<br>Thos. Meyrick             | Frans. Walker<br>[J. Bennetts]<br>John Bennet  |
| Newcastle    | { Fras. Walker<br>Edwd. Dunstable<br>Eleaz. Webster                         | Chas. Wesley<br>Rd. Williamson<br>[Williams]<br>Jas. Wheatley          | Thos. Richards<br>Jos. Cownley                 |
| Lincolnshire | { Thos. Meyrick<br>.....  | Fras. Walker<br>.....  | John Bennet<br>Jas. Wheatley                   |
| IRELAND      |   | Jonathan Reeves  | Jno. Trimbath<br>[Deo Volente]                 |

Q. 15. Which are the Watch-nights [in the ensuing months]?

A. They are these :—

| Intercession. | Watch Nights. | Letter Days. | Love Feasts. |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| July 3        | — 10          | — 21         | — 26 [M]*    |
| Aug. 7        | — 7           | — 18         | — 23 [W]     |
| Sept. 4       | — 11          | — 22         | — 27 [Genl.] |
| Oct. 2        | — 9           | — 20         | — 25 [M]     |
| Nov. 6        | — 6           | — 17         | — 22 [W]     |
| Dec. 4        | — 4           | — 15         | — 20 [G]     |

Q. 16. When and where shall we meet again?

A. If God permit, the 2nd. Monday in May, at Bristol. *Adieu.* †

\* These letters probably stand for Men, Women, and General.

† The Headingley copy ends here.

THURSDAY, JUNE 3,\* 1748.

The following persons being met at the Chapel-House in Tower-Street, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, William Felton, Charles Manning, Thomas Maxfield, John Jones, Thomas Meyrick, John Trimbath, Edward Peronet, Jonathan Reeves, and afterwards Richard Thomas Bateman, John Green, and William Tucker, it was inquired,—

- Q. 1. What is our chief business at the present Conference?
- A. Not to consider points of doctrine (the time will not permit), but  
 1. To review those parts of the Conference which relate to discipline; and 2. To settle all things relating to the school which is now to be begun at Kingswood.
- Q. 2. We are again pressed “only to preach in as many places as we can, but not to form any Societies.” Shall we follow this advice?
- A. By no means. We have made the trial already. We have preached for more than a year without forming Societies in a large tract of land from Newcastle to Berwick-upon-Tweed; and almost all the seed has fallen as by the way side. There is scarce any fruit of it remaining.
- Q. 3. But what particular inconvenience do you observe when people are not formed into Societies?
- A. These among many others: 1. The preacher cannot give proper exhortations and instructions to those who are convinced of sin, unless he has opportunities of meeting them apart from the mixed, unawakened multitude. 2. They cannot watch over one another in love, unless they are thus united together. Nor, 3. Can the believers build up one another and bear one another’s burthens.
- Q. 4. Ought we not to have a longer time of probation for the rich before we admit them into our Society?
- A. It seems not. But neither should we have a shorter. Let either rich or poor stay 3 months.
- Q. 5. How shall we more effectually avoid respect of persons?
- A. 1. Let us take care to visit the poor as the rich. 2. Let us strictly examine our hearts, whether we are not more willing to preach to the rich than to the poor. 3. We will speak to the poor at the chapel as often as to the rich; to the latter on Wednesday, to the former on Friday.
- Q. 6. How often shall we permit strangers to be present at the meeting of the Society?
- A. Let every other meeting of the Society, either at the Foundery,

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\* Should be June 2nd.

the Chapel,\* Bristol, Kingswood, Newcastle, or elsewhere, be inviolably private, no one stranger being admitted on any account or pretence whatsoever. And let public notice of this be given in every place. On the other nights we may admit them with caution.

- Q. 7. May a relapser into gross sin, showing signs of repentance, be immediately re-admitted into the Society?
- A. Not till after 3 months. But he may be admitted on those nights when strangers are admitted.
- Q. 8. Are we not apt, particularly in the Society, to make too long prayers?
- A. It may be we are. There are several exceptions which deserve a peculiar regard. But in general we would not choose to pray above 8 or 10 minutes without intermission.
- Q. 9. What can be done in order to purge and quicken the Society?
- A. Let us strictly examine the Leaders both with regard to their grace, their gifts, and their manner of meeting their several classes.
- Q. 10. If it please God to take our present Ministers away, who should succeed in their place?
- A. We cannot tell yet. God will make it plain whenever that time shall come.

Let the preacher meet the Leaders weekly before preaching at Wapping, Snowfields, and Deptford.

#### FRIDAY, JUNE 4TH,†

Howell Harris, Samuel Larwood, James Jones, and William Shent being added, it was enquired,—

- Q. 1. What can be done in order to a closer union of our Assistants with each other?
- A. 1. Let them be deeply convinced of the want there is of it at present, and of the absolute necessity of it. 2. Let them pray that God would give them earnestly to desire it; and then that He would fulfil the desire He has given them.
- Q. 2. Ought not the Ministers to have as much confidence as may be in those who serve as sons in the Gospel?
- A. It is highly expedient they should.
- Q. 3. Would it not then be well that they should be exceeding unready to believe any evil report concerning them?

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\* It is not clear what chapel is referred to. In the Revised Minutes the entry is "the chapel at Bristol"; and in the Disciplinary Minutes, "the chapel, at Bristol."

† Should be June 3rd.



- A. They ought not to believe it till they have seen them, or written to them and received an answer.
- Q. 4. Suppose one of our Assistants should be tempted to think evil of us and should mention it to another, ought that other to mention this to us?
- A. Not if it was spoken only as a temptation. And if he thinks it a thing of moment which we ought to know, still it may be best to wait a little till he who was under that temptation comes to town, and then let him speak it himself.
- Q. 5. What further advice can be given to our Assistants in order to their confiding in each other?
- A. Let them beware how they despise each other's gifts, and much more how they speak anything bordering thereon. 2. Let them never speak slightly of each other in any kind. 3. Let them defend one another's character in every point to the uttermost of their power. 4. Let them labour in honour each to prefer the other to himself.
- Q. 6. What Assistants do we now agree to receive into the work?
- A. Chas. Skelton (from Ireland), David Trathen, John Whitford of Cornwall, Thomas Colebeck, William Darney, Eleazer Webster, and William Tucker.

SATURDAY, JUNE THE 5TH,\*

Mr. James Erskine being added, it was enquired,—

- Q. 1. What is the design of the foundation at Kingswood?
- A. We design to train up children there, if God permit, in every branch of useful learning, from the very alphabet till they are fit as to all acquired qualifications for the work of the ministry.
- Q. 2. At what age do you design to take them?
- A. Ordinarily betwixt the years of six and ten.
- Q. 3. By what name should this foundation be called?
- A. Kingswood School.
- Q. 4. What in particular is to be taught there?
- A. Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Rhetoric, Geography, Chronology, History, Logic, Ethics, Physics, Geometry, Algebra, Music.
- Q. 5. How many classes do you propose to have?
- A. Seven, as far as we can now judge.
- Q. 6. What is taught in the first class?
- A. Reading: Hornbook, Instructions for Children, Lessons for

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\* Should be June 4th.



Children. Writing, English Grammar, Westminster Introduction to the Latin Grammar. Prælectiones Pueriles, which the child translates into English. Corderii Colloquia Selecta. The children translate the Instructions for Children into Latin and repeat Prælect. Pueriles.

Q. 7. What is taught in the second class ?

A. The Pilgrim's Progress. Kempis, which they translate into English, and repeat. Cornelius Nepos. They translate Lessons for Children into Latin ; and so in the third class.

Q. 8. What is taught in the third class ?

A. Life of Haliburton. St. Austin's Confessions, which they translate. Sallust. Phædrus. Buchanan, which they repeat. Dilworth's Arithmetic.

Q. 9. What is taught in the fourth class ?

A. Kennet's Roman Antiquities. Castellio's Kempis, which they translate. Cæsar. Terence. They translate Mr. De Renty into Latin. Vida, which they repeat : and make Latin verses.

Q. 10. Should all the children make verses ?

A. We may try them for one or two years.

Q. 11. What is taught in the fifth class ?

A. Potter's Greek Antiquities. Erasmus, which they translate. Velleius Paterculus. Tully's Offices. Virgil. They translate Mr. Haliburton into Latin. Westminst'r Compendium of Greek Grammar. Greek Testament. Randal's Geography. Wall Maps. Now also they learn to make themes.

Q. 12. What is taught in the sixth class ?

A. Mr. Law's Christian Perfection, which they translate. Moral and Sacred Poems, which they repeat. Tusculanæ Quæstiones, which they translate into Greek. Horatii, &c., Selecta, which they repeat. Greek Testament. Epictetus. Cebetis Tabula, which they translate. Pythagoras. Greek Epigrams, which they translate into Latin verse. Bengelii Introductio ad Chronologiam. Marshal's Chronological Tables. Shorthand.

Q. 13. What is taught in the seventh class ?

A. Mr. Law's Serious Call, which they translate. Milton, which they repeat. Tully de Natura Deorum, which they translate. Casimir. Xenophon's Cyrus—*translate*. Plato's Dialogues. Homer's Iliad—*repeat*. Now also they make Greek verses. And to declaim. Hebrew Grammar. Hebrew Bible. Vassii Rhetorica.

Q. 14. How shall the children spend one day ?

A. As far as we can discern, thus :—4. Private prayer and singing. 5. Public worship. 6. Work : Breakfast. 7. Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. 9. English. 10. Writing, Arithmetic, &c. 11. Walk or Work. 12. Dinner : Work. 1. Latin, Greek, or

Hebrew. 4. Writing, &c. 5. Private prayer and singing. 6. Walk or Work : Supper. 7. Public prayer. 8. They go to bed, the youngest the first.

Q. 15. But you leave them no time to play ?

A. No. He who plays when he is a child, will play when he is a man.

Q. 16. How do they employ the hours of private prayer ?

A. In self-examination, partly in reading, partly in singing, partly in prayer.

Q. 17. Do they use forms of prayer ?

A. They may use a short form (to be varied continually), and then pray in their own words.

Q. 18. What work do they do ?

A. In fair days and particularly in summer they may work in the garden or grounds. In rainy days they may work at any handicraft work ; and some of them will learn music.

Q. 19. Do they ever work alone ?

A. Never : always in the presence of a master.

Q. 20. What masters do you propose to have ?

A. For the languages,—John Jones, T. Richards, W. Garston. For reading, writing, &c.,—W. Sellon, W. Spenser, Rd. Moss. For French,—Abra. Grow.

Q. 21. What housekeeper ?

A.

Q. 22. What servants ?

A.

Q. 23. How shall they diet ?

A. We think thus :—Breakfast : milk porridge, and water gruel by turns. Supper : bread, and butter and milk by turns. Dinner :—Sunday : cold roast beef. Monday : hash and apple dumplings. Tuesday : boiled mutton, broth, dumplings. Wednesday : vegetables. Thursday : boiled mutton, broth, dumplings. Friday : vegetables. Saturday : bacon and greens; apple dumplings.

Q. 24. Do they never fast ?

A. Yes (if they are in health), every Friday till three o'clock.

Q. 25. What do they drink ?

A. Water.

Q. 26. When are they to learn French ?

A. When they have gone through the school Qr.

Q. 27. Do they go to school every day ?

A. Every day except Sunday. We have no holy-days so called.

Q. 28. How do they spend Sundays ?

A. 6. Dress ; breakfast. 7. Learn hymns, &c. 8. Public worship. 9. Go to Church. 1. Dinner : singing. 2. Public worship. 4. Private exhortation.

- Q. 29. After they have gone through the school, what do they learn the first year?
- A. The Hebrew Bible and the Greek Testament, with Franke's Manducatio. The Apostolic Fathers. Tertullian. Pearson on the Creed: abridge it. Aldrich's Logic, and Sand<sup>n</sup> W.'s Sermons.\* Bp. of Meaux, Introduction to History. Puffendorf's Introduction.
- Q. 30. What the second year?
- A. Marcus Antoninus. Origen. Clemens Alexandrinus. St. Cyprian. Pascal's Thoughts. Our Tracts. Dr. Gell's Works: abridge them. Universal History. Compendium of Ethics. Euclid's Elements.
- Q. 31. What the third year?
- A. Chrysostom, de Sacerdotio: translate it. Macarius. St. Augustine. Fell on the Epistles. Boehm's Sermons: abridge them. Spenser's Fairy Queen. History of the Council of Trent. Burnet's History of the Reformation. Algebra. Physics.
- Q. 32. What the fourth year?
- A. Ephrem Syrus: translate it. St. Jerome. Nelson's Sermons: abridge them. Clarendon. Rapin. Metaphysicæ Compendium. Bishop of Cork.
- Q. 33. What the fifth year.
- A. St. Basil. Forbesii Instructiones Historico-Theologicæ. Heylin's Tracts.

#### MONDAY, JUNE 6TH.

The following persons being present at the Foundery, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Charles Manning, John Jones, Thomas Maxfield, Jonathan Reeves, John Bennet, James Jones, Samuel Larwood, John Trimbath, Edward Perronet, Thomas Meyrick, William Holland, William Shent, W. Darney, Richard Moss, Howel Harris; and Wm. Briggs, William Welch, Patrick Thompson, of Newcastle, STEWARDS, it was inquired,

- Q. 1. How may the Leaders of classes be made more useful?
- A. Let each of them be diligently examined concerning his method of meeting a class. 2. Let more particular directions be given on those heads in which many of them have been wanting.
- Q. 2. What directions?

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\*This probably means the two sermons (on the Means of Grace and on Enthusiasm), referred to by Wesley in a note added to his Extract from Bishop Sanderson on the Manner of using Logic in an Appendix to his own Compendium of Logic.

- A. 1. Let every Leader come into the Society Room as soon as ever the sermon is ended, and there sit down and commune with God in his heart till the Preacher comes. 2. Let no Leader go out till the exhortation and the whole service is ended. 3. Let none speak there but the Preacher or the Stewards, unless in answer to a question. 4. Let every Leader then give notice by note of every sick person and of every disorderly walker in his class. 5. Let every Leader send a note to the visitor weekly of every sick person. 6. Let the Leaders near Short's Gardens meet the Preacher there every Monday night after preaching. 7. Let the Leaders converse with the Preachers as frequently and as freely as possible. 8. In meeting classes let them diligently inquire how every soul prospers: not only how each person observes the outward rules, but how they grow in the knowledge and love of God.
- Q. 3. Can any further expedient be found for making these meetings lively and profitable to those who meet?
- A. Let us try this. Let us observe what Leaders are most blest to those entrusted to their care; and let those meet in other classes as often as possible, and see, &c., what hinders their growth in grace.
- Q. 4. In the country Societies one preacher has sometimes undone all which had been done by him who went before: how must this be prevented for the time to come?
- A. 1. Let it be contrived as often as may be, that one should \* go before another comes. 2. When this cannot be, let him who leaves any place leave a written account of what he has done.
- Q. 5. How may we profit more by the work of God carried on in the distant Societies?
- A. Let the Preacher resident in each send a circumstantial account to the Minister at the Foundery, 1. Of every remarkable conversion: 2. Of everyone who dies in the triumph of faith.
- Q. 6. How are our Societies now divided?
- A. Into nine divisions thus:—
- i. London: including 1. London itself, 2. Kent and Surrey, 3. Essex, 4. Brentford, 5. Windsor, 6. Wycombe, 7. Oxford, 8. Reading, 9. Blewbury, 10. Salisbury.
  - ii. Bristol: including 1. Bristol itself, 2. Kingswood, 3. Bath, 4. Bearfield, 5. The Devizes, 6. Road, 7. Coleford, 8. Oakhill, 9. Shepton Mallard, 10. Middlesey, 11. Beercrocomb, 12. Taunton.
  - iii. Cornwall: including 1. Tavistock, 2. Plymouth Dock, 3.

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\* Not is probably omitted in this phrase.



- Truint, 4. St. Tue, 5. Gwennap, 6. St. Agnes, 7. Illoggan, &c., 8. St. Ives, 9. The Western Societies.
- iv. Ireland: including 1. Dublin, 2. Phillips' Town, 3. Tullamore, 4. Tyril's Pass, 5. Billiboy, 6. Athlone.
- v. Wales: including 1. Cardiff, 2. Fonmon, 3. Lanmais, &c., 4. Lamission.
- vi. Staffordshire: including 1. Stroud, 2. Cirencester, 3. Hanley, 4. Evesham, 5. Wednesbury, 6. Shrewsbury, 7. Leominster.
- vii. Cheshire: including Cheshire itself, 2. Nottingham, 3. Derbyshire, 4. Lancashire, 5. Sheffield, &c.
- viii. Yorkshire: including 1. Leeds, 2. Birstal, 3. Keighley, 4. Acomb, 5. Sykehouse, 6. Epworth, 7. Hainton, 8. Grimsby, 9. The Fens.
- ix. Newcastle: including 1. Osmotherley, 2. Newcastle itself, 3. Sunderland, 4. Biddick, 5. Burnep Fields, 6. Spen, 7. Swallow, 8. Horseley, 9. Plessey, 10. Berwick-upon-Tweed.
- Q. 7. How shall we have a more exact knowledge of the state of the Societies in each division?
- A. Let the Preachers assisted by the Stewards in each Society take an exact list of them every Easter. 2. Let these lists be transmitted within three weeks after Easter to the persons appointed in each division to receive them. Let this same person at the same time diligently inform himself of the spiritual and temporal state of each Society. And let him bring these lists with him to the following Conference and give an account of all.
- Q. 8. Would it not be of use if all the Societies were more firmly and closely united together?
- A. Without doubt it would be much to the glory of God, to the ease of the Minister, and to the benefit of the Societies themselves both in things spiritual and temporal.
- Q. 9. Might not the children in every place be formed into little Societies?
- A. Let the preacher try by meeting them apart and giving them suitable exhortations.
- Q. 10. How may the journeys of our Assistants be fixed for the ensuing six months?
- A. So far as we can yet perceive thus.

FINIS.

















